



# Farmingdale School District

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**DATE:** May 19, 2020

**KIND OF MEETING:** Board Meeting/Adopt Budget for Voter Approval

**PLACE:** Virtual Meeting / [www.farmingdaleschools.org](http://www.farmingdaleschools.org)

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr. Goldberg, Mrs. D'Amico, Mr. Espinosa, Mr. Giordano, Mrs. Lively, Mr. Morales, Mrs. Soete

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mr. Defendini, Dr. Ripley, Mr. Zakian, Dr. Brennan, Dr. Olsen, Mr. Motisi, Mrs. Rogers

**Call to Order** Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mr. Goldberg, President of the Board of Education. In accordance with Governor Cuomo's Executive Order related to temporary modifications to Public Officers Law, the meeting was conducted in a virtual format to allow for the uninterrupted continuation of our important work. The Board meeting notice indicated that access to the meeting would be posted on the district's website at [www.farmingdaleschools.org](http://www.farmingdaleschools.org) and a live feed would be available on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com).

**Executive Session** Motion made by Mrs. D'Amico, seconded by Mr. Giordano, to meet in executive session to discuss specific legal personnel issues in accordance with Open Meetings Law.

Motion carried 7-0

Meeting recessed for executive session at 6:00 p.m.

The Executive Session concluded at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting reconvened in public session at 8:00 p.m.

Board President Michael Goldberg opened the meeting with the following statement:

**Pledge of Allegiance** Pursuant to Executive Order 202.1 (and subsequent orders closing District schools) issued by the Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, signed March 12, 2020, and due to the concerns of the Board of Education for the Health and Safety of the community emanating from the current COVID-19 pandemic, there would be no in-person public access to the board meeting and instead the meeting will be live streamed and recorded. Access to the live stream could be had by accessing the school district's website for a link that will bring you to a youtube site and the recording of the meeting can be accessed on [www.farmingdaleschools.org](http://www.farmingdaleschools.org). In addition, the public participation portion of the meeting was suspended by board resolution.

On a motion made by Mrs. D'Amico, seconded by Mr. Giordano, pursuant to the aforementioned Executive Order, the Board suspended the public participation portion of the meeting and therefore, accordingly, there would be no public participation at this Board meeting.

Motion carried 7-0

Mr. Goldberg continued, stating that the Board of Education was interested in encouraging members of the public to share their ideas, comments and questions. Feedback and questions should be directed to the Board's email account at boe@farmingdaleschools.org. Questions and comments would be responded to by members of the central administrative team and would be publicly reviewed at the next regular Board meeting. Mr. Goldberg thanked everyone for their anticipated courtesy and cooperation. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Superintendent's Update**

**Superintendent Statement** Board President Michael Goldberg stated that the purpose of this evening's meeting was to adopt a revised 2020-2021 budget for voter approval at the June 9, 2020 election. Mr. Goldberg stated that Assistant to the Superintendent for Business Michael Motisi would present the changes that have been made. He also stated that the district had not received state aid allocations from the Governor's Office. Mr. Goldberg introduced Superintendent of Schools Paul Defendini.

Mr. Defendini began the meeting with a summary of the uncertainties as they relate to schools and posed a number of questions that the Board of Education and administration have been focused on: What will the school year-end look like? How can we honor the many celebratory moments that make up the milestones our students face? What will September look like? We want extra-curricular activities and sports; we want students and staff in our buildings; we want all of the things that make Farmingdale special ready for students when we return to school. However, our wants and needs remain uncertain. Mr. Defendini asked that we consider the "Serenity Prayer" which asks us to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can and the wisdom to know the difference. He stated that this is a grounding force for us in that right now there are many things we need to accept, and we need a great deal of courage. He went on to say that wisdom may be the biggest challenge as we so very much want to be back together again.

Mr. Defendini continued with the theme of wisdom as it relates to the upcoming budget vote. He quoted Winston Churchill who stated that "To build may have to be the slow and laborious task of years. To destroy can be the thoughtless act of a single day." A school district is a reflection of the community, and our community has been defined by the many decisions made over the course of the last hundred years. Tough decisions in the budget development were made during the last month; \$1 million was slashed from the budget presented in March and April. The tax levy is lower than in those months. However, we did not interrupt the integrity of what the community expects from us. In the past two months, students have already lost enough. Mr. Defendini encouraged residents to make an informed decision when the absentee ballot arrives in their mailbox at the end of the month.

**Budget  
Presentation –  
Assistant to the  
Superintendent  
for Business  
Michael Motisi**

Assistant to the Superintendent for Business Michael Motisi began his budget presentation. He stated that the Public Hearing would be held on May 27; absentee ballots would be sent to residents beginning on May 28. The school budget notice would be mailed on June 3 and the budget vote and election is June 9. Absentee ballots will be accepted as your vote and must be received by 5:00 p.m. on that day. The counting of the ballots will begin at 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Motisi provided a ten-year history of the school district tax levy increases with comparative data to Nassau County. He stated that the district had built a strong, comprehensive academic program while attending to the responsibility to the community of presenting an acceptable budget. He also presented the data as it related to the community's support.

Mr. Motisi described the changes to the budget in order to decrease the total levy to 1.95%. He walked the Board through the tax levy calculation and detailed the proposed revenue and cost element summaries. He outlined the uncertainties that continue, including the potential loss of state aid which may exceed catastrophic levels reaching \$4 to \$6 million. He noted that the district has a responsibility to continue the academic and support programs and services built over the years and balance that with essential facilities and safety projects. He detailed the cost drivers to the budget that are outside district control, including increases in transportation costs. He also noted that costs and services related to transportation are yet to be determined due to the COVID-19 and New York "Pause." He expressed concern of the economic recovery timeline and noted that one of the unknowns to schools is the potential realignment of resources as new mandates are presented to address the instructional environment. He described the reductions that would be necessary under a contingent budget if the budget is defeated in June.

Mr. Motisi concluded his presentation with a description of the propositions that will be on the ballot, including the budget, a proposition to use funding in the capital reserve fund for bathroom renovations throughout the schools, a proposition to use capital reserve funding for energy performance contract work, and the Farmingdale Youth Council budget. He stated that there are two open seats on the Board of Education and both incumbents were running unopposed. This year, the trustee election for the Library Board of Trustees is also included on the ballot.

Mr. Defendini thanked Mr. Motisi for his presentation. He stated that the district would be releasing information on the website which would provide for an opportunity for community questions. District administrators have always presented to community groups to provide accurate and detailed information on the budget. In light of the Pause, the opportunity for those meetings has been suspended. The question and answer format would allow for the dissemination of accurate information. He returned to the Churchill quote, "To build may have to be the slow and laborious task of years. To destroy can be the thoughtless act of a single day." Mr. Defendini emphasized the importance of not destroying on June 9 that which has taken our community 150 years to build.

**Items for Action**

**Approval to Rescind the Proposed Budget & Property Tax Report Card Resolutions of the April 1, 2020 Board Meeting**

**WHEREAS**, on April 3, 2020, the Governor of the State of New York signed into law Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2020, which requires the Commissioner of Education to reduce State aid payments by an amount equal to the federal aid received through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (“CARES”) Act and allows the Director of the Budget to adjust or reduce State aid to school districts in order to maintain a balanced budget; and

**WHEREAS**, as a result, the Board of Education has decided to rescind its prior resolutions approving the Proposed 2020/21 Budget and the 2020/21 Property Tax Report Card and to re-vote on a revised Budget and Property Tax Report Card that takes into consideration the aforementioned adjustments to State Aid; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that pursuant to Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2020, the Board of Education hereby rescinds its resolutions dated April 1, 2020 adopting the Proposed 2020/21 Budget for Voter Approval, and the Approval of the Property Tax Report Card for the 2020/21 school year; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall take effect immediately.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Suzanne D'Amico, Vice Chairman
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Kathy Lively, Trustee
<b>AYES:</b>	Lively, Morales, Goldberg, Espinosa, Giordano, D'Amico, Soete

**Adoption of the Proposed 2020/21 Budget for Voter Approval**

**RESOLVED**, that the Farmingdale Union Free School District Board of Education adopt the proposed school budget for the fiscal year July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 in the amount of \$173,076,607, subject to voter approval.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Suzanne D'Amico, Vice Chairman
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Anthony Giordano, Trustee
<b>AYES:</b>	Lively, Morales, Goldberg, Espinosa, Giordano, D'Amico, Soete

**Approval of the Property Tax Report Card for the 2020/21 School Year**

**RESOLVED**, that the Farmingdale Union Free School District Board of Education approve the attached New York State Property Tax Report Card for the 2020/21 school year in accordance with Education Law Section 1716(7).

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Suzanne D'Amico, Vice Chairman
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Kathy Lively, Trustee
<b>AYES:</b>	Lively, Morales, Goldberg, Espinosa, Giordano, D'Amico, Soete

**Authorization to Amend Reserve Fund Expenditure Proposition #2**

Motion to amend text of prior resolution approving Authorization of Reserve Fund Expenditure Proposition #2.

WHEREAS, the Board of Education previously approved a Board resolution on March 25, 2020 to approve Authorization of Reserve Fund Expenditure Proposition #2; it is hereby resolved that the text of such motion be amended to read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Education of Farmingdale Union Free School District, Towns of Oyster Bay and Babylon, Nassau and Suffolk Counties, New York, as follows:

**Section 1.** The proposition hereinafter set forth is hereby authorized to be submitted for the approval of the qualified voters at the annual school district election to be held in said School District, on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2020.

**Section 2.** The School District Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to include as a part of the notice of the annual district meeting and election notice with reference to the submission of said proposition in substantially the following form:

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that at said annual election to be held on June 9, 2020, the following proposition will be submitted:

RESERVE FUND EXPENDITURE PROPOSITION #2  
 Shall the following resolution be adopted, to-wit:  
 RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Farmingdale Union Free School District, Towns of Oyster Bay and Babylon, Nassau and Suffolk Counties, New York, is hereby authorized to expend \$5,000,000 from the Building and Facilities Capital Reserve Fund in order to pay the cost of bathroom renovations at various schools, including incidental expenses in connection therewith.

**Section 3.** This resolution shall take effect immediately.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly put to a vote on roll call, which resulted as follows:

**Roll Call Vote:**

<b><u>Name:</u></b>	<b><u>Voting:</u></b>
Mr. Espinosa	Aye
Mr. Giordano	Aye
Mrs. Lively	Aye
Mr. Morales	Aye

Mrs. Soete                   Aye  
Mrs. D'Amico               Aye  
Mr. Goldberg               Aye

IT IS HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED, that such language shall be attached to the minutes of the meeting.

The resolution was thereupon declared duly adopted.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Suzanne D'Amico, Vice Chairman
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mario Espinosa, Trustee
<b>AYES:</b>	Lively, Morales, Goldberg, Espinosa, Giordano, D'Amico, Soete

**Authorization  
to Amend  
Reserve Fund  
Expenditure  
Proposition #3**

Motion to amend text of prior resolution approving Authorization of Reserve Fund Expenditure Proposition #3.

WHEREAS, the Board of Education previously approved a Board resolution on March 25, 2020 to approve Authorization of Reserve Fund Expenditure Proposition #3; it is hereby resolved that the text of such motion be amended to read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Education of Farmingdale Union Free School District, Towns of Oyster Bay and Babylon, Nassau and Suffolk Counties, New York, as follows:

**Section 1.** The proposition hereinafter set forth is hereby authorized to be submitted for the approval of the qualified voters at the annual school district election to be held in said School District, on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2020.

**Section 2.** The School District Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to include as a part of the notice of the annual district meeting and election notice with reference to the submission of said proposition in substantially the following form:

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that at said annual election to be held on June 9, 2020, the following proposition will be submitted:

**RESERVE FUND EXPENDITURE PROPOSITION #3**

Shall the following resolution be adopted, to-wit: RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Farmingdale Union Free School District, Towns of Oyster Bay and Babylon, Nassau and Suffolk Counties, New York, is hereby authorized to expend \$350,000 from the Building and Facilities Capital Reserve Fund in order to pay the cost of construction management services in connection with Energy Performance Contract II improvements in the district, including incidental expenses in connection therewith.

**Section 3.** This resolution shall take effect immediately.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly put to a vote on roll call, which resulted as follows:

**Roll Call Vote:**

<b><u>Name:</u></b>	<b><u>Voting:</u></b>
Mr. Espinosa	Aye
Mr. Giordano	Aye
Mrs. Lively	Aye
Mr. Morales	Aye
Mrs. Soete	Aye
Mrs. D'Amico	Aye
Mr. Goldberg	Aye

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Suzanne D'Amico, Vice Chairman
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Kathy Lively, Trustee
<b>AYES:</b>	Lively, Morales, Goldberg, Espinosa, Giordano, D'Amico, Soete

**Adjournment**

On a motion made by Mrs. D'Amico, seconded by Mrs. Lively, the meeting was adjourned.

Motion carried 7-0

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

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Mary E. Rogers, District Clerk