



**BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES**  
**March 3, 2026**  
**6 PM - NEW YORK MILLS UFSD LIBRARY**

- Kristin Hubley
- Robert Mahardy, Jr.
- Sandra Dare
- Sara DeFazio
- Jacqueline Edwards
- Jeremy Fennell
- Abbie Taylor

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES				
Agenda Item	Who	Information Distributed	Action	Notes
<b>1. MEETING CALL TO ORDER</b>				
<b>1.1 Pledge to the Flag</b>		6:00 pm	Procedural	
<b>1.2 Reading of the New York Mills UFSD Mission Statement.</b>			Procedural	<i>In partnership with students, staff, families, and the community, our mission is to create an educational environment that inspires confidence, builds character, and fosters respect – empowering every student with the knowledge to become a productive, responsible citizen.</i>
<b>1.3 Acceptance of Agenda</b>	K. Hubley	Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> S.DeFazio 2 <sup>nd</sup> J.Fennell / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
<p><i>Special Guests: Ms. Luton and five select students who participated in the Science Fair, “Go-Green Let’s Feed Oscar” Recycling Project done on February 26, 2026. The Kindergarteners were dressed in Go-Green outfits and paraded to the song “It’s A Small World” along with “Oscar” 6<sup>th</sup> grade student and “Mr. Bulb” 4<sup>th</sup> grade student did a small skit on picking up trash and being energy efficient. Members in attendance were also asked to recite a pledge in line with the “Green” Initiative. Board members thanked and congratulated the participants. K. Hubley – Can I ask Oscar and Mr. Light Bulb did you have a favorite project you saw at the Science Fair? Yes. There was one student TJ had a computer that he hooked up to a mini fan with a house and he programmed how fast the fan goes from the computer. It was really cool. (TJ was in the audience) BOE members clapped and congratulated TJ. D.DiSpirito – TJ’s smart-house had a fan that controlled the temperature, it had lights for a Christmas tree and an alarm. K.Hubley – Great job! Parents, thank you so much for coming tonight. You are more than welcome to stay for the rest of meeting but are free to go.</i></p>				
<b>2. PRESENTATIONS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS</b>				

<b>2.1 President's Message</b>	K. Hubley		Information	
<p><i>K. Hubley – We sadly lost a pillar of our community this week, Mr. George Herthum, he and his wife Donna who passed away last July have done a lot of great things with our school district. They founded the Herthum Foundation which includes our Kindergarten Arbor Day Tree planting. They have donated the trees for that for over 20 years. They also sponsor two high school scholarships each year. Then, today I read he started our Bidy Basketball Program. He coached Little League and built the original dug-outs on the little league field. By trade he was a contractor and along with his father who developed Herthum Heights in Whitesboro, which I grew up in. We had a house there until 2020. He also had many properties in the area and donated a lot of time to the school and other functions. So, we just want to give, on behalf of the Board and the school, our condolences to the Herthum Family at their time of loss.</i></p> <p><i>Upcoming dates that we have: Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> we have a Board working session. I want to thank all the board members for making time for that. We will be meeting here from 5 to 7 pm. We did receive invitations today for both National Honor Society ceremonies. I would like to see some of us attend them so, if we can try to coordinate to have some Board Members at those. I do want to say as we are talking about budget, we have one 5- year seat open for the Board of Education. April 20<sup>th</sup> by 5 pm is the end date to submit petitions to run. There is information on our website. and I did see of the site. March 17<sup>th</sup> there is an informational zoom meeting, on “How to Become a Board Member”. I also want to remind everyone that May 19<sup>th</sup> is our Budget and Candidate Vote, from 12 – 8pm at Beekman Gym.</i></p>				
<b>2.2 BOCES Representative Report</b>	K. Hubley		Information	
<p><i>K. Hubey – April 1<sup>st</sup> is a BOCES Budget workshop. Mr. Mahardy, Mr. Fennell and I will be attending that. April 28<sup>th</sup> at 5:30, we will be having a vote here for our board members, it's when all the component school districts meet at their home districts to do the vote. We have been talking a lot about Budget at BOCES as well last month. I did meet with Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Scott Morris, to go over and help me understand more of the budget. It is a fluid Budget that is constantly changing based on the needs of the component school districts. So, they do as much estimating and projecting as they can. Estimating and projecting when they can base on their budgets and utilization and expected needs for next year. They use different methods to calculate the responsibility of each district for various lines of the budget. They are looking at an 18.4% increase on their budget, based on programs they are implementing, changes in the making and based on what our component schools are asking for. More information to come in the April meeting. That's all I have a for a minute. Let's go onto Caleb and the Student Board report.</i></p>				
<b>2.3 Ex Officio Student Member Report</b>	C. Miner		Information	
<p><i>C. Minor – Good evening, The Student Council is selling apparel for the Heart, Run &amp; Walk for Mrs. Hartmann. The Run &amp; Walk will take place at Utica College. Members of our team will meet at Friendly's at 10 a.m. and will walk the college. We are excited for this walk and hope to see some of you there to support the team. Also, we held a Candy Gram sale before break, that was very successful. Kristin – When is it? C.Minor – this Saturday (3/7/26). Kristin – And there is apparel? C.Minor – Well, they concluded selling. It went quickly. An email went out. They might have t-shirt left. K.Hubley – If you could get the information to Mrs. Facci to forward to us. C.Minor – Okay. K.Hubley – Thank you. You can leave if you need to head out. Drive safe.</i></p>				
<b>2.4 Committee Reports</b>			Information	
<p><b>Policy Committee:</b> <i>Sara DeFazio/Chair, Jacqueline Edwards; S.DeFazio – We haven't met since Feb. Hopefully we will meet again in April. You will see on tonight's agenda a couple of policies for second read and adopt. We are going to continue to move through what the Policy Service recommends. Mrs. LaGase has that list so when we meet in April, I'm sure your will see more.</i></p> <p><b>Facilities Committee:</b> <i>Jeremy Fennell/Chair, Sara DeFazio; J.Fennell – We haven't met since the last time.</i></p> <p><b>Communications Committee:</b> <i>Abbie Taylor/Chair, Robert Mahardy Jr.; A.Taylor – No Update.</i></p> <p><b>Transportation Committee:</b> <i>Sandra Dare/Chair, Abbie Taylor; S. Dare – There was a meeting just before this, it was budget information Mrs. LaGase will cover in her report.</i></p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety Committee:</b> <i>Robert Mahardy Jr./Chair, Sandra Dare; R.Mahardy – We will meet again in April.</i></p> <p><b>Finance Committee:</b> <i>Jacqueline Edwards/Chair, Jeremy Fennell; J.Fennell – No additional updates</i></p>				

**SBI:** *Jacqueline Edwards* (**SBI Alternate:** *Sara DeFazio*); K.Hubley – Ms. Edwards is on vacation this week, so Mrs. Taylor and I attended the SBI meeting last night, as Mrs. DeFazio told us at a previous meeting, she is no longer available to be an alternative to the meetings, Mrs. Taylor has taken that spot for the remainder of the school year. So, I will let her take it from here. A.Taylor – yes it was nice to meet everybody from the different school districts. There were four main points that I took away from the meeting last night. There is a SBI Coordinator position open, which they had a lot of candidates apply. They seem very optimistic with the turn-out. It will be nice to see who fills the position. They wanted to make sure everyone is aware of the Showcase, held at the Herkimer BOCES on March 26<sup>th</sup>. As we know it is the same date as our Honor Society event, we as a Board typically divide and conquer so both are attended. They did have a meeting with Region Patrick Mannion – they said it went well, same topics as years past, but they felt the topics and concerns they bring to them are the same year after year but that also proves a point to our legislators that these are still an issue for us and not changing. The fourth and last item was a reminder of the Distinguish Service (“DSA”) and Student Achievement Awards (“SSA”), which I believe is selected by the School Admin, is that correct? M. LaGase – Yes, the Student Achievement award is selected by the building administration. The Distinguished Service Award is often decided at the board level. A.Taylor – Yes, so Mandy made copies for us on what that criteria is for the ”DSA” so we can look at that at our workshop and hopefully select a person. Which will be hard since we have a lot of wonderful people in our district. That covers it.

<b>3. CONSENT AGENDA</b>				
<b>3.1 Approval of 3.2 through 3.4</b>	K. Hubley	Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> R.Mahardy, Jr. 2 <sup>nd</sup> J. Fennell / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
S. Dare – I had a question from before, when Lisa wasn’t here. L. Stamboly – Yes those have been taken care of. It reports just to let us know when they hit a stale date. S.Dare – Gotcha. Okay and last is there a reason why we do tolls by mail rather than an EZ Pass? It’s obviously way cheaper to get a business EZ Pass account. But it isn’t anything significant, we don’t use it often. L.Stamboly – I will make a note of that to look into it.				
<b>3.2 Business Office Reports</b>				
<b>3.3 CSE Reports</b>				
<b>3.4 Approval of the Previous Minutes</b>	2.3.26			
<b>4. OLD BUSINESS</b>				
<b>5. NEW BUSINESS</b>				
<b>5.1 Personnel Report</b>		Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> R.Mahardy, Jr. 2 <sup>nd</sup> S. Dare / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____

<b>5.2 Approval Community Use of Facilities Request with the Village of New York Mills and Yorkville – 2026 Summer Program</b>		Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> S.DeFazio 2 <sup>nd</sup> A.Taylor / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
<b>5.3 Approval of the New York Mills UFSD Calendar aligned with the OHM BOCES School District 2026-27 School Calendar</b>		Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> S. DeFazio 2 <sup>nd</sup> J. Fennell / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
<b>5.4 Policy 2001 Number of Board Members and Terms of Office (Second Read, Adopt)</b>		Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> R. Mahardy, Jr. 2 <sup>nd</sup> S. Dare / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
<b>5.5 Policy 2003 Responsibilities of Board of Education Members (Second Read, Adopt)</b>		Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> S. DeFazio 2 <sup>nd</sup> A. Taylor / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
<b>5.6 Policy 2006 Board of Education Ground Rules (Second Read, Adopt)</b>		Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> S. Dare 2 <sup>nd</sup> J. Fennell / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
<b>5.7 Policy 2100 Powers and Duties of the Board of Education (Second Read, Adopt)</b>		Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> S. DeFazio 2 <sup>nd</sup> A.Taylor / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
<b>5.8 Policy 2102 Duties of the District Clerk (Second Read, Adopt)</b>		Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> S. DeFazio 2 <sup>nd</sup> R. Mahardy, Jr. / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
<b>5.9 Policy 2103 Duties of the Treasurer (Second Read, Adopt)</b>		Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> S. Dare 2 <sup>nd</sup> A. Taylor / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
<b>5.10 Policy 2105 Duties of the School Activities Treasurer(s) (Second Read, Adopt)</b>		Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> A. Taylor 2 <sup>nd</sup> J. Fennell / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
<b>5.11 Resolution to Approve the 2026 Capital Reserve Fund</b>		Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> S. DeFazio 2 <sup>nd</sup> J. Fennell / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____

*K.Hubley – I want to discuss briefly; we do need to put these is motion and they do need to be on the ballot for the Budget Vote.*

<b>5.12 Resolution to Approve the 2026 Transportation Capital Reserve Fund</b>		Yes	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> S. DeFazio 2 <sup>nd</sup> R.Mahardy, Jr. / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
--	--	-----	--------	---

*K.Hubley – same as 5.11 as to why we need to do that.*

--	--	--	--	--

## 6. K-12 REPORTS

--	--	--	--	--

<b>6.1 Executive Principal K-12</b>	M. Facci		Information	
-------------------------------------	----------	--	-------------	--

*M. Facci - Good evening. March has been a very busy month. To start out I would like to congratulate Nathaniel Dzwonkowski on his victory on his Bowling Section III Shootout. Nate will be competing in the State Championship on March 14<sup>th</sup> in Syracuse. Congratulations again to Nate. In other celebrations I'm proud to say we started out the second semester on a high note, at the close of the quarter 57 students earn high honors with an average of 94-100% and 64 students earned honors with an average of 88-93% . For the high honors that is a 16% increase from last year and honors is a 23% increase. In April, two of our Seniors will be working with Ms. Foote with the AFRL Competition, happening at Griffiss. It is a week-long session where they will be given a topic to discuss and investigate, with a competition held on Friday along with an award ceremony on that day. This serves as a way for students to utilize their math and science skills on real world problems that the AFRL personnel are currently researching. Winners of the competitions will be awarded varying prizes in the form of cash contributions to their New York 529 Account. The challenge competition will again begin the first day of April break and end that Friday. Abbey Calhoun and Mark Klein, will be attending with Ms. Foote. The student prizes range from \$2,500 for first place and \$500 for 8<sup>th</sup> place per student, I'm excited we are able to engage in that again. We did that about 7 years ago and did have some winners. So, it's really exciting. A.Taylor – What does AFRL stand for? M.Facci – Air Force Resource Laboratory, in conjunction with the Griffiss Institute. For our February students of the month 7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Melody Lovecchio, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Zia Patel, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade: Carter Lovecchio, 10<sup>th</sup> Grade: Diva'Nae Brown, 11<sup>th</sup> Grade: Rose Martell and Aidyn Barber in 12<sup>th</sup> Grade. The Optimist Club awards those students a monetary award for Seniors and a coupon for a free pizza for grades 7 – 11. Before break we talked about tightening up some procedures to protect instructional time and reduce the amount of time students are in the hallways. Teachers have consistently shown real dedication and we are seeing improvement. Students have been very cooperative. I want to thank them for that. Students are getting in class on time and prepared. In April students in grades 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> will take part in New York State ELA and Math Exams. Grade 8 will also take the Science Exam in May. These tests will be computer-based and completed on student assigned Chromebooks. Teachers have been practicing using online platforms. We encourage students to complete these exams carefully as they are helpful to our School District. Dates to remember March 5<sup>th</sup> is a Spring Sports Meeting, The Heart Run and Walk in support of Mrs. Hartmann will be on March 7<sup>th</sup>; Progress Reports will be mailed March 17<sup>th</sup>; National Jr. Honor Society Induction Ceremony will be on the 19<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. here at school; Drama Club presents "Anything Goes" on March 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>; our National Honor Society Induction and Banquet will be at 6p.m., March 26<sup>th</sup> held at the Monarch Banquets and lastly on March 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> Jr. High All County Festival will take place we have a few students taking part. For Chorus: Layla Holmes, Graham Panella, Carter Lovecchio, Peyton Corsino and for band Melody Lovecchio. That's all I have.*

	D. DiSpirito		Information	
--	--------------	--	-------------	--

*D. DiSpirito – Same focus as the middle school. We are also testing in ELA, Math and Science in April and May. Grades 3-6 teachers are really buckling down getting ready for test prep in small and large groups and review some of the standards that are most missed, so, that our kids are comfortable answering the questions. They are also getting comfortable with answering on Chromebooks. In grades K-2, we are looking at ELA specifically for universal instruction and trying to identify and prioritize standards that students are really struggling with. Our celebrations are Dr. Suess's birthday on Friday, Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade are doing green eggs and ham breakfast in the classroom they will be wearing their hats and t-shirts. His birthday was yesterday (3/2). We will celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Our Student of the Month assembly is March 25<sup>t</sup> we will be bringing it back to the Auditorium, although I will say the two assemblies that were held in the gym nobody seemed to mind. Not the teachers, not the parents, not the staff. It was nice having the two smaller groups and we might continue doing that just because parents get to come*

closer and it does go by a bit quicker. Mrs. Howe has been amazing with the “Bean Stack” reading challenges and results. Kids are reading thousands and thousands of minutes; we are up to 250,000 minutes total. Everyone is doing a great job with that. I don’t know what the next challenge will be. I am waiting patiently to see, I know Mrs. Dare was going to buy more Bamboozel Jelly Beans, I still have a pack. So, we will see. Last, by not least, last time we talk about data so I did bring some results from Star and Dibels assessments. (hand-outs given Reading and Math) Dibels is used for fluency in Phonics. District level results vs. state level results were reviewed. We are so much higher. [K.Hubley – Where is that?] On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> pages of each the reading and math you can see district compared to state. K.Hubley – Okay. S.Dare – So we are that much above. It almost sounds to good to be true. A.Taylor – This is wonderful. S.DeFazio – so Mrs. D, I know 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is the lowest. Why do you think that is? D.DiSpirito – this is the lowest because it is the biggest gap year. I mean from learning to read and reading to learn. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade always seems to struggle the most and they also probably have the most skills to cover. This is the first real experience with “theme” and “gist” and inferencing. Inferencing is really, really tough at the beginning of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. S.DeFazio – Mmm. Okay this might be a silly question but are there supports in place to help the students or teachers in the classroom bridging that gap? D.DiSpirito – Yes, we have 2 reading teachers who take 5 students each, that’s 10. Our math teacher takes 5 students. TA’s and Teachers take students, so that every student has the support. Sometimes multiple times throughout the day. But third grade is always the toughest. S.DeFazio – Okay. Thank you. K.Hubley – What do you think? Why is 8<sup>th</sup> grade so low for math? Is it because they are taking more specialized course now in math? D.DiSpirito – It could be. It could be, 8<sup>th</sup> grade has always been a bit of an enigma, you are at the highest level of middle school math instruction. S.Dare – so even with that 41 we are still above the benchmark. S.DeFazio – that is a testament to our teachers too. Great teaching is happening in the classrooms and our students too. Its not always easy. Great job at crushing it. A.Taylor – what is the colorful one? D.DiSpirito -Dibels. The one thing about Dibels that is hard to read, it is a changing target. There are always only 26 letters of the alphabet, so that is going to be the easy one. Yet, there are vocabulary words, tricky words and other things that are moving. So, at the beginning of the year children are expected to know 5 out of 10, but at the middle they are expected to know 8 of them. So, you won’t see a whole lot of change from beginning to middle. K.Hubely – This is great information. So, can we get updated by the August meeting? D.DiSpirito – Yes. We won’t have State results by then but yes, I will have local, star results and Dibels before the end of school. K.Hubley – Great, if we have questions can we reach out the Mrs. DiSpirito directly? M.LaGase - Yes. These are the types of data points that really shape the grade level or content area meetings. Talking about student that need to go into a flex group or students that have met the requirements and can come out. If there is pre-teaching or reteaching that needs to happen with particular skills and/or content areas. This is really the work within the construct of having a grade level team meetings and making data-driven decisions based on student outcomes. It is a lot of time for the educators and the multi-tiered support team members but is a framework we have found is very successful in having a strong handle on where kids are and targeting skill development. S.Dare – looking back at the math 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade is that where we had the staff turnover in the beginning of the year, right?!? So, is that reflective of that? M.LaGase – Keep in mind those two grade levels historically have been your largest opt-out grade levels where students haven’t participated and the gap has widened. R.Mahardy, Jr. - Do you use this data to drive curriculum work too? M.LaGase – Yes. K.Hubley – Great. So, Mrs. Facci, do you have something like this for high school as well? M.Facci – I do have Star results. I didn’t bring them this evening but they do show growth in both ELA and Math. There is definitely concerns about the turn over in the middle school grades. K.Hubley – so if we could get what you have comparable to this, so, we can review high school and the growth. I know we talked about it last month about some measures put in place to help struggling students. I ‘m just going back and looking at last months meeting minutes. There seems to be a pivot going on during the spring and one on ones going on after school in a 10<sup>th</sup> grade period. So, are you seeing students attending? Is it a requirement or option for them? M.Facci – It’s a requirement. I can share that with you. [M. Facci – yes. Great, are there any other questions for the principals? S.DeFazio – it’s the busy season.

<b>7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT</b>				
<b>7.1 Enrollment Update</b>	M. LaGase	Yes	Information	
<b>7.2 Superintendent's Update</b>	M. LaGase		Information	

*M. LaGase – So the first portion is going to focus on the Budget. [slide presentation] Line-item Budget hand-out passed to look at each particular item. What am going to do is highlight a few key areas on your line-item budget where we are seeing larger increases. As you will notice at the end a budget-to-budget difference, which is a 2.85% difference from the current budget to the projected budget. Some of the key areas are; The instructional section is the bulk of the budget which represents 75 % or more of the overall budget itself. Another key area of increase is Special Education programming. We have been talking about the increased costs consistently over that last several budgets. Again, in the 2026-27 school year we will have several out-of-district placements. Right now, we are looking at about 45 students. It is down from last year but some of the placements are higher needs with higher costs. These programs are not elected programming, they are determined by the Committee on Special Education based on student needs. We are seeing an increase in the number of students entering that are requiring more intense services. Another line-item with rising costs is transportation. Again, we have talked a lot about looking closely at efficiencies. Lisa and I are going to continue to talk with Dr. Timbs about how to level out some of these increases. One of the things we are looking at is our bus purchase replacement cycle to see if that can be extended to help offset some of the costs in this area as well as some other efficiencies. The last key area I want to review in the budget detail, are employee benefits. Again, you know, health insurance costs continue to increase. This is another big factor in our budget that we have limited control over. The bulk of these costs are often on the employer. Just to be mindful this Board has been very cognoscente of efficiencies. You have had strong fiscal oversight, work has been done to maximize investments, and utilize shared services with BOCES to help maximize aid and affordability but our expenditures are increasing and our revenues are not inline with the pace. Lisa is there anything to add? L.Stamboly – In June we will be going to serial bonds, on the project, so that impact of the bonds coming on actual budget lines but as far as overall impact to the tax payer there is none, because, we are utilizing the 500,000 out of the capital reserve. So even though you see that increase there is no tax increase. M.LaGase – To give a little context in terms of tax levy because we are at a point now where we don't anticipate any changes to this budget. I don't foresee an increase in aid. Right now with the 1% increase in Foundation Aid, that is approximately \$45,000. The framework of this budget is maintaining our programs and services with no additions. We are a tax dependent district. The tax ley percentages from 2019 through 2025 were reviewed L.Stambloy – I filed the tax cap and after all calculations are done, we have the ability to raise taxes up to 3.04% That's our cap or maximum. M.LaGase – Meaning we can't go any higher without a super majority vote. Now we do have the 1% in the foundation aid, it's very minimal. [S.DaFazio – right, for \$50. (joke)] When you look at budget to budget increase, we are at least a 2% levy to have a balanced budget. At this point the board has to adopt a spending plan and set the tax levy. Do you have any additional questions? S. DeFazio – I have a question. I want to go back to the Special Education piece and the amount of money going out to the Special Education programs. There is absolutely no chance of opening a class here for students? M.LaGase – we are looking into that and what it would look like in terms of efficiency of costs in with staffing, benefits, related services etc. All the items it takes to bring a class back and the difference in terms of not driving back aid. This current budget is planned to meet the current needs, but moving forward, if we stay on this trend, given the size of our district, we cannot continue to absorb these costs. S.DeFazio – What is the difference between elementary and high school level, in terms of caseloads and/or certifications? Do we have anyone in the high school level that is certified on that level that could come and support*

the needs if we were to... M.LaGase – Yes, but right now that person’s caseload is full at the high school level. S.DeFazio – Thank you. Perfect, I understand. Another question... Lisa I’m looking at our operational costs, I notice there is no increase in terms of like gas and electric or anything like that? M.LaGase –, that is in my report. L.Stamboly – you can adopt the budget now and then you can have a discussion on your levy. In order for me to do any of the filings with the state I will need to know where you feel you will flush out in your levy. If you really only need a 2 and you are between 2 and 3, I don’t think you have much of a discussion of where you want to be. K.Hubley – the last levies we looked at we’ve seen a certain balance we need to come out at to balance the budget. On the last page I’m looking at 2.85, is that including the 1% increase? L.Stamboly – No. it’s not a percentage on what you are spending. It’s not a dollar for dollar match. That’s not how it works A.Talor - So really that one percent. J.Fennell – isn’t that like a hundred grand? L.Stamboly – Not even, more like 85,000,... 87,000. [S.Dare – So how much is that per tax payer per year?] Pennies per the 1%. You only control the levy as a board, providing that the assessed value doesn’t move, which are in the Assessor and State hands. Let’s say it is 87,000. That would be spread out across the entire tax base. S.Dare – I understand. Do we know how many tax payers there are? A.Taylor – I thought it was figured out last year to be about \$40 more a year. L.Stamboly – That would be the entire increase if you were to go out at 3. S.Dare – okay. So, it’s very minimal. It’s a fraction of what a monthly increase of what National Grid bill is. To put into perspective for tax payers. A.Taylor – though historically, we have to think about how the community has responded to tax increases and that is part of the issue. We don’t want to put a 3% out there and everyone says “No” then there are other issues. K.Hubley – I just want to say we have always been cautious and coming out at where we need to come out. We have held these discussions, are we going to risk the budget for an extra 80 thousand? I think we need to start thinking more since there are state mandates coming up that are unfunded, along with the electric buses. M.LaGase – Next year looks like it may be a very tough year. A.Taylor – Dr. Timbs kind of gave us that warning already. If we don’t use our tax levy then we’re going to pay the price maybe not in this school year, but in the near future. K.Hubley – we also need to look at our reserves right now are being used for this Capital Project. So, there is nothing left as a cushion. R.Mahardy, Jr. – Right, and that cushion is going to be a whole lot flatter next year with whatever we leave on the table this year, it effects. L.Stamboly – it can, yes. The danger with a higher tax next year is you may not have the ability to raise to 3. It may be a 2.4 depending on what the school tax cap comes out at. Last year was around a 2.79. J.Fennell – Ideally, we should try to go out at the max every time to allow the cushion, but we obviously know that isn’t good for the voters. L.Stamboly – Right, and the hard part here is the economy at scale. Know that the perception of a 2 or 2.5, maybe 3 and we are talking 40,000 it isn’t that detrimental. A.Taylor – Does the newsletter break that down? We sit here candid and do a wonderful job breaking it down, but I feel these conversations help people understand and put it into perspective. K.Hubley – That is why we try to have the public budget workshop. S.DeFazio – Abbie, to your point at that as well, is to talk about not only what we need but the effects of if we don’t get it. If we don’t get it, there is a possibility of maybe we are not all sitting around this table and that’s a scary thought for many people in this community. They come here for the smaller class sizes, for the small community feel. J.Fennell – Yeah, so the problem we have as before, is we do a presentation for the community members, along with a newsletter but really if it could be figured out, maybe ChatGPT would have the sentence that actually has all the right words, because there is a whole page... A.Taylor – I think there is an opportunity with the Budget Newsletter to have more candid words to help. M.LaGase – There are certain requirements for budget information in the newsletter but we can definitely look at how to craft a clearer message... S.DeFazio – Where would we go in terms of if I wanted a census of what does our voting population look like? In The past I know we were looking at the elderly community, a lot of our demographic has changed now to 2 family housing. M.LGase – Mandy can share with you the number of voters for the last 3 or 4 elections. S.DeFazio – Okay. It is low, right? But that would be helpful to know when we have these conversations. A. Taylor – As a board, we are all very active in our community. Is it appropriate for us to talk about the budget with people or social media to help provide information? M.LaGase – You can’t say vote yes, but you can educate them on the budget. K.Hubley – You can’t

influence but you can provide information. J.Fennell – Our contingency budget was a huge thing last year. A lot of people didn't know, that when you vote "no" it doesn't mean we start figuring it out again, it just means we reduce to "this". It kind of reset peoples mind when they heard that and of what you lose when that happens. R.Mahardy, Jr. – Right the 2 buses are off the table right then and there. M.LaGase – correct. J.Fennell – You do actually effect the school not just pushing back on the School Board. L.Stamboly - the newsletter budget will show what we would lose.. R.MaHardy – I don't have a problem voting on the budget tonight. J.Fennell – I don't either. Lisa, did you say if we vote on the budget and not the tax levy, does that make it difficult or easier for you. L.Stamboly – I can get things started. I will need both to file. At least the spending plan would get things rolling. A.Taylor – I did have a second question. Beekman Gym. I know that obviously we are not receiving any funds. Is that built into any expense? M.LaGase – Not in terms of expenditures for upgrades. You are also going to hear about a few new mandates that as a board we need to really talk about moving forward that will impact the budget.

K.Hubley – Alright, then do I have a motion from the floor to accept the Budget ? Mr. Fennell first, Mr. Mahardy second. All those in favor, 6. Okay, so we are good with the spending plan.

K.Hubley - Do we want to continue more discussion on the tax levy? S.DeFazio – I think it is a good discussion to have, personally. R.Mahardy, Jr. – I'm thinking 2.25 A.Taylor – I'm thinking 3, I'll say it, because I feel if we can use our voice to help explain why and share with the community. S.DeFazio – Michele, can you do me a favor. Can you go back to the years past? M.LaGase – Yes. A.Taylor – I'm still thinking 3 because of what Dr. Timbs has advised us in the future. I'm thinking of our students in the years to come and what we want for our district. M.LaGase - we've talked about the difference in the past between 2, 2.25, 2.5 ? S.DeFazio – Abbie, I hear what you are saying and I'm leaning that way I believe having the census information is important too, to see where are we? Is it parents in our community coming out to vote? Do we have to approach the elderly community, are they the ones coming to vote? When you and I ran we were very active and out there talking. I'm struggling with jump from 2 to 3 because we had several years of zero, that hurt us. K. Hubley – I agree. I think it's too big of a jump right now as a 3. I want to get us there, but a jump from 1.9 to 3% is too much. I'm also concerned about not having those reserves and I'm concerned about more information to come out of the Superintendent's Report of unfunded mandates we will have. I remember talking with Sara and Abbie when you were running and the question was asked "how do we change the no vote?" I said, you're not going to change a "no" vote, we had people voting "no" on zero increase. A.Taylor – Which is okay. I'm not trying to change a "no" vote, I'm trying to get more people to get out and say "yes". S.DeFazio – Can you Lisa, I know you're doing the math, so, if you can do 5 more things that would be great... I'm thinking of what Lisa said I don't want to hurt us either by noting going out at a 3 so when we come around to the budget vote next year when we are really going to need the money, that we can't hit a cap or we are exposed to a cap we actually need. So, I get it, I hear you. R.Mahardy, Jr. – I agree. A.Taylor – That is still really low compared to other school districts. S.DeFazio – Do we have to vote on that right now? M.LaGase – No, you don't have to vote on that now, I would really prefer you think about that and are comfortable. L.Stamboly – 1% is 84,267 so half of that is 42,133 so the difference is... J.Fennell – It's not going out at 3 is like a lion's share but 80,000 bucks is still \$80,000. S.DeFazio – I just want to be careful too because I know not everybody maybe as fortunate as us. We may be talking a few pennies, but \$40 to one family may be something different to another family. M.LaGase – That's just it. I just have a little reservation on the 3 because that is huge percentage increase for this community given the last several years levy. To leave money on the table is not the best course of action and Dr. Timb's would tell you that and Lisa would tell you that but to risk a defeated budget for \$40,000 difference? Is that the position we want to be in? If you are comfortable with that, that is fine. L.Stamboly – the kick there is to go to contingency you're going to lose all the buses. Which would lose over \$200,000 coming right of the back end of the budget

for \$40,000. Those are the cross roads. A.Taylor – if we did 2.5 if that’s what everybody was comfortable with. I would be okay with that too, but I think it would... J.Fennell – Ha, this feels like déjà vu. We did this last year and then ended up at 2. M.LaGase – It is a tough conversation. S.DeFazio – Let’s process it. Get through the executive session. Come back and see where we are at. M.LaGase – I can cover some of these other items and you can let it sit. S.Dare – Based on the amount and number of parcels it averages \$5.91 a month. Average. K.Hubley – I going to say the general public isn’t going to figure that. They are going to look and think we were 1.9%, we can say the education, the education. We can do so much, but you can only lead a horse to water, right!?! If they want to be educated they will. If they want to see 1.9 but now see a 3... I was in the middle at 2.25, but leaning more toward 2.5. J.Fennell – I’m at either we are at a 2 or a 3%. The stuff in the middle isn’t... K.Hubley – Let’s table it for now and continue with our Superintendent’s Report.

M.LaGase – Thank you Kristin, for your acknowledgement of Mr. Herthum. His’s contributions to New York Mills and the greater community were many...he has had an impact on so many people. I just want to acknowledge we truly appreciate all he and his family have done. In terms of the Science Fair, Thank you again, to Mrs. Galime, Ms. Luton, Mrs. Steffen, Mrs. Sroka, Mrs. Howe and Mrs. DiSpirito for organizing the event, the Board of Education for allowing it to continue to be part of the extra curriculars activity schedule. Our students really presented some creative, innovative projects. They were very excited to share and seemed to really enjoy the evening. Thank you to all the parents and family members who I know assisted with the projects and for all those who attended. We had a really good turn-out. In terms of Athletic recognition, Mrs. Facci shared Nathaniel’s recognition and I want to share a little flier showing our winter sports season NYSPHSAA Scholar Athletic Teams and Members. Our Varsity Basketball team average is 92.5; Varsity Volleyball team average 96; Varsity Girls Indoor Track 92.29; congratulations to all for their outstanding efforts and to their commitments to academics and athletics. On to new unfunded mandates. As you may have seen Governor Kathy Hochul’s 2026 budget included expansion of Pre-K funding aimed at making Pre-K “truly universal” for all 4-year-olds state wide. The plan does increase funding for existing seats to \$10,000/pupil but there is a mandate now to ensure every 4-year-old has access to a free full day Pre-K seat by 2028-29. We do not offer Pre-K currently. We are looking very closely at the dollar amounts to see how much will actually cover program and service provisions. As you know with other aids it is far from 100%, that means costs will fall to the local level. Particularly, for those districts that are tax dependent like we are. We are looking at what this mandate means for us in terms of space, staffing, and budget implications. It is a pretty big lift for our community, so, just want to put that on the table that this is a newly established mandate. We need to be prepared to be in compliance for 2028-29 school year. R.Mahardy, Jr. - There are a lot of regulations. M.LaGase – Yes, bussing, classroom space size, staffing ratios, etc. S.DeFazio – What are our current practices to canvassing the community to determine say how many 4 year-olds we would have. M.LaGase – It’s pretty much projections based on Kindergarten enrollment, my guess is we would need to run two sections possibly three depending on student/staff ratios. S.Dare – So, its mandatory to offer it, but, not mandatory to attend. Correct? M.LaGase – Correct. But according to the mandate if a family seeks a spot, we have to provide one. S.Dare – Ok so brainstorming and thinking out loud. Say I get a childcare subsidy that provides me child care for free from 7-5, why would I send my kid here from 9-3? What I’m saying is just because someone has access to it, doesn’t mean they are going to do it. M.LaGase – Most of our families have been utilizing the program in Whitesboro as well as others. I would anticipate this will be of interest to families and my guess is we will be needing 2 sections. K. Hubley – I just had an alumni ask last week if we offered Pre-K and had to say no. S.Dare – There are less schools in the county that don’t offer it that do offer it. K.Hubley – Right, but there is a reason why we haven’t, one being we don’t have the space. R.Mahardy, Jr. – It’s a lot to look at. S.Dare – Another random thought if we were to carve out or utilize a very small section of Beekman Gym not including the basketball court, would we be able to get funding? M.LaGase – Mr. Timbs’ and I have started those discussions. K.Hubley – Two steps ahead. J.Fennell – We were all thinking that. M.LaGase – this is very preliminary

at this point. K.Hubley – Right and if we have to do some type of Capital Project we would have to move fast on it. J.Fennell – What did you say? Right now, the only funding they give is “x” amount per student? M.LaGase – Yes, and it does not look to cover the cost of running the entire program. S.DeFazio – I have a side bar question. How many Kindergartners do we have with-out-of district placements currently? M.LaGase – Special Ed? D.DiSpirito – Currently 3 to 4. Incoming is 5, that we don’t have resources for. M.LaGase –The next item relates to another un-funded mandate. The Zero Emission Busing. SED has been responsive to concerns and have instituted a waiver application. We have submitted a request for that waiver, there is specific criteria that is required for that. Based on what they have released I am hopeful we will qualify. We have also enlisted a consultant and they have started a Feasibility Study which is a requirement. On another note, Officer Chase approached Administration and asked if he could conduct a Mock DWI Event for upper classman, grades 10 through 12. He has done a lot of initial planning, it would be incoordination and consultation with our Police Dept, Fire Dept. even helicopter arrival on the football field for Med Service. He has done quite a bit of work on this. He has secured 2 cars donated for the crash scene. It will only be for students whose parents authorized permission to participate. We know it is a sensitive topic but we do think it is impactful. It is important for our kids sometimes who don’t necessarily think that rash decisions can change lives. We will put notice out on parent square just so the community knows it is happening and don’t panic when they see a helicopter drop onto the football field. We feel it is a worth-while event and will move forward with it if the Board approves. K.Hubley – Is there a tentative date? M.LaGase – it is right before Prom. About an hour and a half event. S.DeFazio – Thanks Officer Chase! M.LaGase - In the Capital Project we talked about the new sound board and few other features coming to the auditorium. Big Apple made some additional recommendations in terms of sound. The decision has been made to move forward with the additional work in the 2026-27 Capital Outlay. Just wanted to make you aware of that. In addtion, as you know we are part of a Health Consortium for our employee benefits, part of that includes monitoring and oversight of dependent coverage. So, I just want the Board to be aware that our Consortium will be engaging in a review of dependent coverage to make sure all of our dependent on the plan qualify. Joyce Bates does an excellent job. We are in a good position. This is happening to all Districts who participate in the consortium. Lastly, the utility cost increase. So, in light of recent. I know one neighboring District was on the news talking about the impact of utility costs in their budget. I just want to remind you we are part of a Cooperative Agreement through OCM BOCES with the NYSMEC Consortium, this helps us secure budgetary certainty for utility costs for the 26-27 Budget, 27-28 Budget and the 28-29 Budget. You already passed this, this good news. We are not seeing those large delivery charges. This really gives us rate stability, comprehensive pricing and more of a collective strength. L.Stamboly – Yes, we locked in right ahead of it. The timing was excellent.

1<sup>st</sup> S. DeFazio 2<sup>nd</sup> R.Mahardy, Jr. / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain \_\_\_\_

**8. COMMUNICATIONS**

**8.1 From the Floor -**

District Clerk

Information

Persons wishing to speak should first be recognized by the President, then identify themselves, any organization they may be representing at the meeting, and the agenda topic or other matter of public concern about our schools that they wish to discuss. Topics must be addressed one at a time with each individual's comments limited to three (3) minutes for a total of twelve (12) minutes designated for the public comment agenda item.

S. King – I have a couple of things. Caleb didn’t say when he was speaking before about the school team walking but it is a fund raiser so. If any of you aren’t walking, I’m sure Caleb would love to take your donation. The Heart Association does great work. As you were discussing your budget increase or levy. The number I didn’t hear after 30 years is 2.95 may sound a lot better than 3. Something to consider later on. The Senior part of the question for seniors this year I became eligible for Enhanced Star. Boy, is that a big difference in my tax bill so I would make sure as you talk to Seniors on a fixed income to remind them of the Enhanced Star program makes the increase very minimal. Happy to hear about the DSA /SAA. I heard you are going on a retreat in a week or so, please consider the Fire Fighters in our community.

*J. Goodfriend - I would like to just thank the community for their ongoing support of the Brody Foster Benefit. It was well received. So many donations from our teachers, our staff and the community. He was definitely touched. It was a wonderful show of New York Mills Just want to thank you everyone.*

<b>8.2 Board Discussion</b>	BOE		Discussion	
<b>9. EXECUTIVE SESSION ** (If Needed)</b>	BOE	7:45 pm	Discussion/Action	1 <sup>st</sup> S. Dare 2 <sup>nd</sup> A. Taylor / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
<b>9.1 Return to General Session (time)</b>	BOE	8:22 pm	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> S. DeFazio 2 <sup>nd</sup> S. Dare / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
<b>10. ADJOURNMENT</b>				
<b>10.1 Adjournment</b>		8:23 pm	Action	1 <sup>st</sup> R.Mahardy, Jr. 2 <sup>nd</sup> J. Fennell / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____

\*\*§105. Conduct of executive sessions.

- 1. Upon a majority vote of its total membership, taken in an open meeting pursuant to a motion identifying the general area or areas of the subject or subjects to be considered, a public body may conduct an executive session for the below enumerated purposes only, provided, however, that no action by formal vote shall be taken to appropriate public moneys:**
  - a. matters which will imperil the public safety if disclosed;
  - b. any matter which may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer;
  - c. information relating to current or future investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense which would imperil effective law enforcement if disclosed;
  - d. discussions regarding proposed, pending or current litigation;
  - e. collective negotiations pursuant to article fourteen of the civil service law;
  - f. the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation;
  - g. the preparation, grading or administration of examinations; and
  - h. the proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value thereof.
- 2. Attendance at an executive session shall be permitted to any member of the public body and any other persons authorized by the public body.**