

**SPECIAL MEETING  
NOVEMBER 29, 2021- MINUTES**

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The special meeting of the Hempstead Public Schools Board of Education was held in the Superintendent's Office, 185 Peninsula Boulevard, Hempstead, New York 11550. The meeting was called to order at 6:14 P.M., moved by Trustee Johnson and seconded by Trustee Stith. All of the Board members were present. The purpose of the meeting was to address a complaint of Board member misconduct.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Olga Brown Young	President
Victor Pratt	Vice President
LaMont E. Johnson	Trustee
Patricia McNeill	Trustee
Randy Stith	Trustee

**SED MONITOR:**

William Johnson

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Regina Armstrong	Superintendent
Patricia Wright	District Clerk
John Sheahan	General Counsel
Stuart Besen	Special Counsel

**Trustee Stith moved, seconded by Trustee Pratt to convene to executive session at 6:15 P.M. for advice of legal counsel.**

**MOTION**

**YES 5**

**MOTION CARRIED**

To convene to  
executive session

**Trustee Pratt moved, seconded by Trustee Johnson to reconvene to open session at 7:25 P.M.**

**MOTION**

**YES 5**

**MOTION CARRIED**

To reconvene to  
open session

**Trustee Stith moved, seconded by Trustee Pratt to approve to waive policy # 2342.**

**1. BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education waives Policy 2342 requiring the agenda, together with supporting background materials, to be distributed to Board members seven days in advance of a Board meeting, and the Board shall permit the consideration of the hand-carry resolutions presented at the November 29, 2021 meeting of the Board; and

**BE IT RESOLVED**, the waiver of Policy 2342 is effective only for the hand-carry resolutions considered at the November 29, 2021 meeting.

**MOTION**

**YES 4**

**MOTION CARRIED**

To waive policy # 2342

**NO 1 (Trustee McNeill)**

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**\*\*\* Trustee McNeill left the meeting at 7:27 P.M.**

**Trustee Pratt moved, seconded by Trustee Stith to approve to hold a removal process hearing.**

**2. WHEREAS**, the Board of Education of the Hempstead Union Free School District ("Board") is the duly constituted governance body of the School District; and

**WHEREAS**, Trustee Patricia McNeill is a member of the board and bound by the district policy and legal requirements that confidential information acquired in executive session shall not be disclosed and disclosure of same is a violation of General Municipal Law Section 805-a(1)(b) and the Hempstead Union Free School District Code of Ethics and policies; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board has been advised that there is reasonable suspicion that Trustee Patricia McNeill violated General Municipal Law Section 805-a(1)(b); the Hempstead Union Free School District Code of Ethics and policies and the Commissioner of Education Decisions and her duty of confidentiality and disclosed confidential information to a third party who is not on the Board of Education and was not in executive session; and

**WHEREAS**, the confidential information pertained to internal discussions of the school board members that occurred in executive session relating to pending investigations and pending litigation; and

**WHEREAS**, there is reasonable suspicion that Trustee McNeill disclosed internal discussions and confidential information that was exclusively held in executive session in violation of her duty as a board member of the Hempstead Union Free School District; and

**WHEREAS**, the remaining members of the Board of Education have consulted with special counsel or have had an opportunity to consult with special counsel on the legal options available to them to address this serious concern;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,**

1. The Hempstead School Board of Education hereby authorizes an action to seek removal of Trustee Patricia McNeill from the Hempstead Union Free School District Board of Education pursuant to Education Law Section 1709(18); the Hempstead School District Policy; and the New York State Commissioner of Education decisions for alleged official misconduct.
2. The written charges dated October 28, 2021, are hereby approved, and preferred against Trustee Patricia McNeill and the Board is authorized to conduct a hearing on January 10, 2022 for this said matter and any subsequent day the hearing officer deems necessary for said matter.
3. Pursuant to its authority the Hempstead School Board appoints James Clark, Esq., at a rate of \$250.00 per hour as hearing officer for said removal proceedings and authorizes him to report to the Hempstead Board of Education such findings and conclusions of law for a final determination by the Hempstead Schools Board of Education. Proceeding will start January 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 P.M.

**MOTION**

To approve to hold

Removal process hearing

**YES 2** (Trustees Stith & Pratt)

**NO 1** (Trustee Johnson)

**ABS. 1** (Trustee Brown Young)

**MOTION FAILED**

**\*\*\* Trustee Stith for the record:** "We've spoken and had the opportunity on several occasions to seek advice of counsel we had discussions among ourselves as the governing body over the school district, our state monitor has weighed in as well, and though it has been the opinion of the state monitor that the Board has to do certain things when it comes to making or setting precedence, as we have done in the past, it has been proven just now that the Board does not

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*have to do things based on precedence and it is sad, this Board of Education that I was not a part of a few months ago, actually removed a Trustee for violating board policy and state ed. Law, and because it's a different Board and a different Trustee who is being accused of the same thing, we've wasted time and resources on an investigations, the evidence was clear, the advice of counsel was clear with s recommendation, because it's a different Board, we opted collectively not to do the same thing. So it looks like different strokes for different folks, and you can't say in my opinion, that you don't know, what you don't know and you wasn't here. We all was elected to do the job of the people who elected us and has just transpired was a waste of money and pure foolishness for the optics of politics and it's not appreciated. Had it been me it probably would have been a different story, had it been somebody else it probably would have been a different story, but if wasn't going to go ahead and approve this resolution, why pay counsel, special counsel all this money to conduct investigations, why waste my time and have me come here and discuss the matter while people play politics, that's what it was tonight, politics and it's a shame, because the amount of money Mr. Besen is gonna charge the district, the amount of money we have already spent on investigations came from the students, so there's no reason to say that you didn't know, you only supposed to abstain when you don't have enough information and those of us who have voted not in the affirmative because of whatever you hand enough information because if we wasn't gonna do something we shouldn't have wasted the money. But what we just proved tonight as this governing Board certain people can break rules and certain people can be held accountable, but others can't, and what you did tonight is on the record, so just remember that"*

**Trustee McNeill came back to the meeting at 7:56 P.M.**

**There was a presentation from BBS and Ed Cullen the district's architects and Business Consultant in reference to the facilities needs of the district.**

**Trustee Stith moved, seconded by Trustee Pratt to convene to executive session for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time at 8:44 P.M. for advice of legal counsel.**

**MOTION**

**YES 5**

**MOTION CARRIED**

To convene to  
executive session

**Trustee Stith moved, seconded by Trustee Pratt to reconvene to open session at 9:28 P.M.**

**MOTION**

**YES 5**

**MOTION CARRIED**

To reconvene to  
open session

**Trustee Stith moved, seconded by Trustee McNeill to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 P.M.**

**MOTION**

**YES 5**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted:

Patricia Wright  
District Clerk