

**SPECIAL NORTH PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
WITH THE NORTH PROVIDENCE TOWN COUNCIL**

APRIL 7, 2011

The North Providence School Committee met for a joint meeting with the North Providence Town Council on April 7, 2011 at 7:05 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers at the North Providence Town Hall. Members present were Chairman Marciano, Mrs. Reall, Mr. Cataldi, Mr. Iannetta, Mr. Palmieri, Mrs. Picard and Ms. Leva. Also present was Superintendent Ottaviano, Mr. Scungio, Dr. Donoyan, Mr. McNamee, Mr. Lynch, Mr. Milazzo, the members of the North Providence Town Council, Mayor Lombardi, Mr. Fossa, Ms. Vallee, and Mr. Welch.

The Town Council President called the meeting to order. Mayor Lombardi spoke about the suggestion to bring everyone to the table and exchange ideas to try to save money. He spoke about the savings the Town realized by switching from the Trust to Travelers

Insurance, how the Town cut their advertising budget, suggesting combining grounds-keeping services, downsizing the finance department, technical staff, maintenance, auto repair, and health care.

He said he is not trying to strip the school department of its authority, he is just trying to save money. Chair Marciano spoke about sharing the Mayor's concerns but the School Committee needs to balance the savings with the education. As far as the health care, the school department is cooperating. As to the advertising, the Attorney General issued an opinion that advertisement has to be in the Journal. As for landscaping, there is a due to due from and as for personnel, it is mandated by law with respect to the teachers. As to Special Education, there are state mandates and as to Finance, the School Department is dealing with a tragedy. Next, Superintendent Ottaviano spoke about having five administrators overseeing 3,500 students and over 500 employees. Additionally, North Providence is in Region 3 for transportation, which is the largest in the State and there is a mandate that students must be bussed to private and parochial schools. She next focused on the office staff and the myriad of responsibilities they have, the two positions that were eliminated, and the fact that there is no receptionist. As to technology, there are 2 people responsible for daily repairs and over 1000 computers in the District with some of the computers being over twenty years old. Mr. Fossa explained that the Town is looking at combining building maintenance, landscaping and finance. Superintendent Ottaviano talked about the fact that the Town told the School Department that it does not have the equipment and

manpower to do the School Department's landscaping. Mayor Lombardi suggested that if the Town and School Department were operating in one office, then emergencies could be prioritized. He continued by talking about the fact that the School Department gets to authorize the use of the fields and the Town gets to cut them. He added that these are the reasons we need to readjust and straighten them out. Mr. Fossa also spoke about the economy being bad and the fact that we can't do things the way we used to because it no longer works. Mr. Milazzo spoke about an emergency plumbing issue and expressed concerns with the fact that when he contacted public works, he was told they didn't have the equipment he needed and he had to then pay for emergency services to come in. Superintendent Ottaviano spoke about the differences in the number of employees in the Town and the Chart of Accounts that the Auditor General requires the School Department to use with over 5000 accounts the fact that the grants are very restrictive in nature, and the licensing requirements for the various areas. Mr. Fossa spoke about the fact that although a lot of the things that the Superintendent addressed are true, we may have to try it to see if it works. Chairman Marciano felt that everyone is getting a great deal of information. However, sometimes change is difficult for people and the school department is not dismissing the ideas. Mr. Guisti asked if the School Department is writing their own checks yet? Superintendent Ottaviano explained that with the death of the Finance Director, it hasn't happened yet. Superintendent Ottaviano felt that is easier to do things on the lower level, like cleaning supplies. Members of the School Committee and

Council offered suggestions as to ways to cooperate and begin to plan ways to work towards combining resources like purchasing power to buy supplies in bulk to realize a cost savings. Mayor Lombardi focused on the insurance issue again and all the savings that could be realized. Members of the Council and School Committee volunteered for a subcommittee. Everyone agreed that there is a great deal of consensus.

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Margie Caranci, Recording Secretary of
the North Providence School Committee**

Date Submitted to the Committee:

Date Approved by the Committee: