

**FORT LEE BOARD OF EDUCATION
FORT LEE, NEW JERSEY**

SPECIAL PUBLIC BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Monday, May 2, 2011

All Purpose Rm., School No. 1 – 250 Hoym St.

1. The Regular Business Meeting was called to order at 7:39 PM by Mr. Arthur Levine, President of the Fort Lee Board of Education.
2. Mrs. Angela Napolitano led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
3. Public Announcement by the President of the Board of Education:
The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of the Act, the Fort Lee Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time, and place thereof posted in the entrance hall of the Board Office, 255 Whiteman Street; published in the Board's designated newspapers: The Record, The Star Ledger, The Bergen News and The Suburbanite; filed with the Clerk of the Borough of Fort Lee; and mailed to all persons, if any, who have requested said notice.

4. **ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Mr. John Bang, Mr. Carmelo Luppino, Jr., Mrs. Linda McCue, Mrs. Angela Napolitano, Mr. Yusang Park, Mr. Peter Suh, Mr. Joseph Surace, Ms. Helen Yoon and Mr. Arthur W. Levine

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Raymond J. Bandlow, Mr. Steven Engravalle, Mrs. Cheryl Balletto, Mr. Matthew J. Giacobbe, Esq. and Mr. Yaacov Brisman, Esq.

ABSENT: None

5. **REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

- ◆ Good News Report
- ◆ Letter of thank you for the donation of \$1,700 to School #4.

6. **REPORT OF THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES-None**

7. **BOARD SECRETARY AND TREASURER'S REPORTS**

- ◆ For the month of March 2011.

	Motion by Mr. Carmelo Luppino, Jr. To approve the Board Secretary and Treasurer's Report For the month of March 2011.	Seconded by Mr. Joseph Surace On roll call, Motion carried. Ms. Helen Yoon abstained.	
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8. **APPROVAL OF MONTHLY BUDGET STATUS CERTIFICATION**

- ◆ For the month of March 2011.

	Motion by Linda McCue To approve the Monthly Budget Status Certification for the month March 2011.	Seconded by Mrs. Angela Napolitano On roll call, Motion carried. Ms. Helen Yoon abstained.
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9. **PUBLIC WORK SESSION**

10. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- ◆ Minutes from the Executive Session and Regular Business Meeting on March 28, 2011.

	Motion by Mrs. Angela Napolitano To Approve Minutes from the Executive Session and Regular Business Meeting on March 28, 2011.	Seconded by Mr. Carmelo Luppino, Jr. On roll call, Motion carried. Ms. Helen Yoon abstained.
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11. **QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS LISTED ON TONIGHT'S AGENDA AND ANY OTHER TOPIC OF CONCERN**

- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace asked the board to pull Resolution #1B until they have time to discuss it.
- ◆ Mr. Matthew J. Giacobbe stated that we are pulling Resolutions #12P, #13P and #14P for private discussion and then we will come back. At this time we can conduct other business and then go to private.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park asked to pull Resolution #1POL until the Policy Committee can discuss it.
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that a person who is retiring is on Resolution #1P then why go to the seminar?
- ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow answered that it is a continuation of this year's responsibilities.
- ◆ Mr. Peter Suh stated that Resolution #20P states a volunteer will work at School # 2 and what will they do?
- ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow answered tutoring.
- ◆ Mrs. Linda McCue questioned Resolution #3CUR and why April 9, 2012 is starting the Spring Recess so early in the month.
- ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow stated that it is related to the holidays where Good Friday is the week before which coincides with the state testing calendar.
- ◆ Mr. John Bang commended Cheryl Balletto regarding a school cleanliness issued at School #3.
- ◆ Mrs. Paula Colbath asked the board to clarify pulling Resolution #1B and #1POL. She also asked about Resolution #2CUR, the Italian curriculum and if the board has discussed this?
- ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow stated that a memo was sent to the board regarding any updates for core curriculum standards.
- ◆ Mr. Tom Myers stated that he presented a donation to the board.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that during the campaign he had heard statements that posed a question to the board if each member had supported a Charter School.
- ◆ Mr. Matthew J. Giacobbe stated that it is not appropriate to address each board member.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff asked Mr. President, Mr. Arthur Levine if he can promise to ask each member of the board if they can support the Charter Schools.

- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that he found the vote on the budget troubling. Fairlawn passed the budget by 1,000 votes. The public schools are a part of the community pride. The board should reach out to the community instead of having a political warfare.
- ◆ Tracey Mattei asked about Resolution #3CUR and questioned the changes on the calendar.
- ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow answered about March 6th to March 20th professional development because of the state testing. She also asked about Resolution #17P and what is it?
- ◆ Mrs. Cheryl Balletto answered that a Compliance Officer implements the student education plans for non-classified students.
- ◆ Mrs. Tracey Mattei asked if the Instructional Supervisor in Resolution #2P, K-8th grade is solid.
- ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow answered that we have a second round of reorganization structure that we are using K-8th grade and is salaried in the administration contract.
- ◆ Tracey Mattei asked if the 504 Compliance Officer receives a stipend.
- ◆ Mrs. Cheryl Balletto answered no.
- ◆ Christina asked how many children are at the Preschool Program.
- ◆ Mrs. Cheryl Balletto answered approximately 40 students. The lottery is tomorrow at 11:am and anyone can attend.
- ◆ Mr. Howard Lipoff stated that as treasurer for the FLEA he would like to congratulate old members, new members and the new Board President. He expresses with deep displeasure with the way the High School teachers were given letters about their termination while they were teaching. These letters should have been brought to the Principal's office and had been taken care of there. The board has some hard decisions and should do it in a logical way by asking to see the evaluations of them. This is a mistake. The feeling here is that the morale has gone to an old time low. Many of the non-tenured teachers are looking elsewhere because of how their colleagues have been treated.
- ◆ Ms. Diane Elemers stated that she represents students at the APA dance and the softball team, and they have been inspired by the teachers Cutler and Romano. We are putting the dance program behind us that is one period long with a teacher that is not certified to teach dance. She then read a letter.
- ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow stated that we are not cutting APA and the teacher is appropriately certified. The program will be changed due to enrollment. There is a 2% cap and expenses are higher. We said the teaching staff reductions are looked at in the non-required areas. We value the programs and performances.
- ◆ A student asked if the budget doesn't pass what happens.
- ◆ ___ stated that we asked the same biggest cut in administration.
- ◆ Mr. Carmelo Luppino stated that it was a pleasure seeing you and we have the best interest for all children. We are controlled by funds and agree with you 1000%. We will fight as much as possible. If it fails, then we will go to the Mayor and Council. They can cut more or leave the budget the same.
- ◆ Ms. Linda Casoria, as the Vice President of the FLEA asked about paraprofessionals. When will they know?
- ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow stated that we are talking about sixty people. We met last Friday and have to reduce a line item, restructure some full time, part time, eliminate some and some will be condensed. Dr. Raymond Bandlow also stated that seniority is not a factor. It is based on student needs and what is good for them.
- ◆ Brian Rodriguez, a student asked if there was a cut in the APA, and the coach for softball. The cuts are in place for the least needed. Why aren't the students asked about the cuts? Teachers make a difference in our lives. Some teachers aren't good and are only there for us to get in trouble.
- ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow stated that an evaluation and tenure is not the responsibility of the students. There are two different cuts eliminating staff positions due to enrollment. Jobs will be filled by someone else. There is a reduction of force where you can consolidate jobs. The least impact is on students.

- ◆ Dr. Nina Levinson stated that the first time the budget was voted on was a 50/50 split last year which was a reasonable majority.
- ◆ Mr. Matthew Giacobbe stated that non-tenured employees will be notified by May 15, 2011 and employees under the union contract by April 30, 2011. We have an agreement for May 4, 2011. All employees did not opt to waive their rights and will be discussed in private before the vote.
- ◆ Dr. Nina Levinson asked about Resolution #2B and the additional services for a security company. Why are there so many problems at the High School?
- ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow stated there is always a potential for concern when you have 1,100 students.
- ◆ Dr. Nina Levinson asked about Resolution #7F and the appointment of the Broker of Record. She also asked about Resolution #10P and the bus drivers.
- ◆ Mrs. Ada Garcia asked if the PTA helps pay for field trips.
- ◆ Mrs. Nancy Stern asked about Resolutions #12P, #13P and #14P. Will the positions be known to the public, and if they are abolished will they be filled by people discussed in private if held by employees.
- ◆ Mrs. Nancy Stern asked about Resolution #13F and is there any consideration to eliminate the position of the Treasurer. There was a Mount Olive resolution and under a CAP it would be beneficial. I sent the article to Cheryl.
- ◆ Mr. Matthew Giacobbe stated that the resolution is non-binding. The legislature will decide.
- ◆ Mrs. Nancy Stern asked if Mr. Berman filed a lawsuit.
- ◆ Mr. Matthew Giacobbe stated there is a lawsuit and is defended by the board insurance company.

12. At approximately 8:45 PM, Mr. Carmelo Luppino, offered, Mr. Peter Suh seconded by, to recess the Special Public Business meeting. On voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

13. At approximately 8:55 PM returned to Public Session.

- ◆ Ms. Jane Kunikwa stated that she is here for the second time on behalf of her daughter Alex for support of Ms. Baker and Mr. Romano. Mr. Romano has done so much for my daughter. If they had evaluated him then he wouldn't be let go. If this was a corporation they would weed out the bad and keep the good. Mr. Romano has made a difference in my daughter's life and is wonderful. You have made a decision that shouldn't have been made.
- ◆ Chrissy, alumni from the High School stated that she had heard about the modifications of the APA and it seems like the end. I was a dancer and was in the Dance Club with Ms. Beffre. With the APA we had confidence that we could be professional dancers and had wanted the feeling of doing a performance. The students know and had a chance to work with these teachers. They showed me how to be a writer by having me write every day. It helped me change my career. She doesn't need a job since she works for the New Jersey Ballet. I believe in this and you should think about it.
- ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow stated that she should see the High School principal about these issues.
- ◆ Ms. Sandra Sanchez stated that this is very important to students. There are teachers who don't answer you when you leave messages. They don't care about helping children.
- ◆ A student stated that this is one of the best schools. You don't see that Cliffside Park is better than Fort Lee. Think big business, and the schools will go down. You are taking away teachers and the even the Middle East is better.

- ◆ Mr. Howard Pearl stated that an email has not been done for the budget. With 2,000 people voting this only shows what groups have certain interests. I like kids and rate your teachers.com. Kids know more sometimes. Good teachers are hard to find like the ones that inspire. Some teachers who are tenured give Ms. Church a terrible time.
 - ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff had spoken to several teachers and the morale is low. This needs to be addressed.
 - ◆ Mrs. Mildred Frederico asked if there will be cameras when televising the board meetings.
 - ◆ Mr. Arthur Levine stated that this will be discussed at the next meeting.
 - ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that the televised meetings and the status of the Holy Trinity School can be put on the next agenda work session.
 - ◆ Mr. John Bang stated that he agreed and thinks that we should televise the board meetings.
 - ◆ Mr. Yusang Park also agreed.
 - ◆ Mr. Yusang Park motioned and Mr. John Bang second to vote on televising meetings. Mr. Brisman advised you to follow policy. Since it has not been done recently it should be discussed.
 - ◆ Mrs. Maria Mahalakos stated that it is hard for people to get up and speak. She found it astounding and that people were not paying attention is insulting. Please stop it.
 - ◆ A senior at the High School asked if adding security guards at the High School meant more than keeping a teacher. The High School had three different principals. Teachers are the only ones that are consistent with loyalty. I can name Mr. Romano who has inspired me. Teacher cuts will never have Fort Lee on top. It would be a terrible thing if Coach Romano will be leaving.
 - ◆ Mr. Andy Cheng said thank you for the answers. His daughter is in APA. Mr. Cheng's wife is a choreographer and gave money for the arts. We feel we are qualified about speaking on behalf of Ms. Culter. If you can't find a replacement, the quality of the High School will go down and there will be a decrease in enrollment. The arts do change student's lives. We need to look at how this is going if we disconnect between students, parents and this body. Our involvement will not be aligned and we will meet with Ms. Church.
 - ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow stated that if we didn't have to make budget reductions it wouldn't be very difficult to make these decisions. We need to maintain all standards. We will work with Ms. Church but we can't do it if the enrollment is too small.
 - ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace asked why isn't the High School on the list?
 - ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow stated that the High School teachers did not chose to nominate anyone.
14. At approximately 9:50 PM, Mr. Peter Suh offered, Mr. Carmelo Luppino seconded by, to enter into the Special Private Business Meeting. On voice vote, motion carried unanimously.
- ◆ Discuss personnel, the personnel list, Resolutions #12P, #13P, #14P and an employee investigation.
15. At approximately 10:25 PM, Linda McCue offered, Angela Napolitano seconded by, to adjourn the Special Private Business Meeting and go into the Special Public Business Meeting. On voice vote, motion carried unanimously. The Board returned at 10:30 PM.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that he didn't see the principal on the list and would like to know the reason why.
 - ◆ Dr. Raymond Bandlow stated that the principal did receive a Rice Notice and there is no public discussion.
 - ◆ A parent stated that if two English and Special Education teachers are let go because of the budget then do you have to replace them. Please review their evaluations. Think politics is in any business.

- ◆ Mrs. Nancy Stern asked about Resolution #12P and the reductions of four supervisors were not included during the time of the budget. Did the board know about this then?
- ◆ Mr. Carmelo Luppino stated there were scenarios at budget time.

16. **RESOLUTIONS AND REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

<u>Board Committee</u>		
#2B	Additional Services for Bowles Security	
	Motion by Mrs. Linda McCue To Approve #2B #1B Pulled	Seconded by Mrs. Angela Napolitano On roll call, Motion carried. Ms. Helen Yoon abstained.

<u>Committee of the Whole</u>		
#1CW	Acknowledgment of 2011 Governor-Teacher Award Recipients	
	Motion by Mrs. Angela Napolitano To Approve #1CW	Seconded by Mr. Carmelo Luppino On roll call, Motion carried. Mr. Joseph Surace made a comment that he was disappointed that no High School teachers were recommended by their colleagues. Mr. Arthur Levine agreed with Mr. Joseph Surace's comments. Ms. Helen Yoon abstained.

<u>Curriculum Committee</u>		
#1CUR	Approval of Class Trips	
#2CUR	Approval of Italian Curriculum	
#3CUR	Approval of Revised School Calendar for The 2011-2012 school year	
	Motion by Mrs. Linda McCue To Approve #1CUR - #3CUR	Seconded by Mr. Carmelo Luppino On roll call, Motion carried. Ms. Helen Yoon abstained.

<u>Finance</u>	
#1F	Approval – Current Bills List
#2F	Approval – Cafeteria Claims – March 2011
#3F	Approval – Extended School Day Program Claims – March 2011
#4F	Approval – Line Item Transfers – March 2011
#5F	Acceptance of Donations

#6F	Performing Arts Dinner Contract	
#7F	Appointment of Broker Of Record	
#8F	South Bergen Jointure Transportation Contract	
#9F	Acceptance of Cooperative Agreement (E-DAP) Education During a Pandemic Grant	
#10F	Appointment of Custodian of District Records	
#11F	Appointment of Public Agency Compliance Officer (PACO) and Qualified Purchasing Agent	
#12F	Approval - Educational Data Services	
#13F	Approval - Appointment of Treasurer of School Monies	
	Motion by Mr. Joseph Surace To Approve #1F - #13F	Seconded by Mr. Peter Suh On roll call, Motion carried. Ms. Helen Yoon abstained.

<u>Health-Welfare and Safety</u>		
#1HWS	Approval - Payment of Home and Bedside Instruction Services	
#2HWS	Approval - Out-of-District Placement	
	Motion by Mrs. Angela Napolitano To Approve #1HWS & #2HWS	Seconded by Mr. Carmelo Luppino On roll call, Motion carried. Ms. Helen Yoon abstained.

<u>Personnel</u>		
#1P	Approval - Staff Trips and Conferences	
#2P	Approval of Job Description - K-8 Instructional Supervisor	
#3P	Retirement of Michele Weisberg as Elementary Teacher at School No. 2	
#4P	Retirement of Gail Fabiano as High School Mathematics Teacher	
#5P	Retirement of Richard Greenfield as Middle School Guidance Counselor	
#6P	Maternity Leave for Nadege Stretz as High School Business Teacher	
#7P	Medical Leave for Carmen Roetman as High School Spanish Teacher	
#8P	Return from Family Leave for Georgia Servos as Confidential Assistant to the Business Administrator	
#9P	Transfer of Ada Acosta as Elementary Spanish Teacher to High School	

#10P	Bus Drivers 2010-2011	
#11P	Extended School Day Program Staffing 2010-2011	
	Motion by Mrs. Angela Napolitano To Approve #1P - #11P	Seconded by Linda McCue On roll call, Motion carried. Mr. Joseph Surace abstained from Resolution #11P. Mr. Yusang Park and Ms. Helen Yoon abstained.
#12P	Abolishment of Positions	
#13P	Reduction in Force	
#14P	Appointment of Staff Members for the 2011-2012 school year	
	Motion by Mr. Carmelo Luppino To Approve #12P - #14P	Seconded by Mrs. Angela Napolitano On roll call, Motion carried. Mr. John Bang and Mr. Yusang Park abstained from one name on Resolution #13P. Mr. Joseph Surace and Ms. Helen Yoon abstained.
#15P	Appointment of Jorge Dicostanzo as School No. 3 Custodian for the 2011-2012 school year	
#16P	Appointment of Substitutes for 2011-2012 school year	
#17P	Appointment of 504 Compliance Officer	
#18P	Appointment of Additional Substitutes for the 2010-2011 school year	
#19P	Placement of Student Teachers, Student Interns and Practicum Candidates for 2011-2012 School Year	
#20P	Volunteer at School No. 2	
	Motion by Mrs. Angela Napolitano To Approve #15P - #20P	Seconded by Mrs. Linda McCue On roll call, Motion carried. Mr. Carmelo Luppino and Mr. Joseph Surace abstained from Resolution #16P. Mrs. Linda McCue abstained from one name on Resolution #18P. Mr. Yusang Park and Ms. Helen Yoon abstained.

17. At approximately 10:40 PM, Mr. Carmelo Luppino, offered, Mrs. Angela Napolitano, seconded by, to adjourn the Special Public Business meeting. On voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

Roll calls and resolutions of this meeting are attached.

Respectfully submitted,

CHERYL BALLETT
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY

CB/mp
Att.
5-9-11