

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

MINUTES – PUBLIC WORK SESSION

Monday, February 11, 2013

Fort Lee High School Library/Media Center,
3000 Lemoine Ave. Fort Lee, New Jersey 07024

1. The Public Work Session was called to order at 8:14 PM by Mr. Yusang Park, President of the Fort Lee Board of Education.
2. Mrs. Holly Morell 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, 2175 Lemoine Avenue; published in the Board's designated online media outlet/newspapers: Fort Lee Patch.com, The Record, The Star Ledger, The Suburbanite; filed with the Clerk of the Borough of Fort Lee; and mailed to all persons, if any, who have requested said notice. Please be advised that this meeting is being taped and will be broadcasted on local TV and the district's website at a future date.
4. **ROLL CALL**
PRESENT: Mrs. Esther Han Silver, Mrs. Holly Morell, Mrs. Candace Romba, Mr. David Sarnoff, Mr. Peter Suh, Mr. Joseph Surace, and Mr. Yusang Park

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Sharon Amato, Mrs. Cheryl Balletto and Dennis McKeever, Esq.

ABSENT: Mr. Steven Engravalle, Mr. Carmelo Luppino, Jr., and Ms. Helen Yoon
5. **PRIVATE WORK SESSION**
6. **REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**
 - ◆ Dr. Sharon Amato shared the Good News Report with the public. Students from the Middle School math team won the competition. Three students in the High School received writing awards.
 - ◆ There is a Special Public Work Session of the Fort Lee Board of Education held on Wednesday, February 13, 2013 at 7:00 pm in the Jack Alter Fort Lee Community Center to discuss School Security.
 - ◆ Student Film Presentation- Michael Morell from the GSA Club made a video. Jiho Kim and Eric Jung won the Student Film award.
 - ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that at the last board meeting someone asked why should I stay in Fort Lee and this is why. The Math team in the Middle School won out of thirty-two teams and would like to see more moving forward.
 - ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell said how proud she is that one day her son will grow into a nice young man. Thank God and count our blessings. We have an awesome district and anyone who doesn't see it isn't looking hard enough. She is very proud of Michael and thinks he is awesome.

- ◆ Dr. Sharon Amato stated that our kids are awesome because of our staff and parents. It's not one person but the whole organization. Thank you for all you do.
- ◆ Mr. Peter Suh stated that he knows both of our students and this is only a small piece of what they do. We get a glimpse of beauty in our schools.
- ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell stated how phenomenal you are as a dancer.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that the students are an inspiration to us and thank you for the presentation.

7. PUBLIC WORK SESSION

- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that he has a walk-in resolution and it was not just written up. The Architect of Record is one of the RFP's. The B & G Committee interviewed two firms. He read the resolution and the rates.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that he wanted the resolution pulled until the mark-up is set.
- ◆ Mrs. Cheryl Balletto said yes, they said we have never used it and would negotiate if used.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated yes, once we get clarification from the firm.
- ◆ Mr. Peter Suh asked about Resolution #9F being from Minnesota..
- ◆ Mrs. Cheryl Balletto answered yes the new law allows us to be a part of.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that he has concerns of the community with Resolution #1POL. Technology can be used to study and can't be used until the principal approves it. The principal's permission can't be reasonably withheld and we want to make sure of that. Mr. Yusang Park stated that we are hoping to get guidance from the Superintendent and we didn't get anything back. We need further study and research.
- ◆ Mr. Peter Suh stated that he would like to pull all policies if we don't have the superintendent's input. He recommends that we table all policies until we get input.
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that he agreed with Mr. Suh and Resolution #10P has an error.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that Resolution #1B&G should have a little more I the description.
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that this resolution was discussed in the B&G Committee meeting. In redoing the gym, perhaps there should be new safety rules and the stands will hold less capacity because of a five foot requirement and railings. The floor has to be redone and there could be asbestos in the glue. The sound system is not too good and the lighting should be under the energy audit.
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba said that we need money to do the floors, bleachers and sound system that need repairs.
- ◆ Mrs. Esther Han Silver asked about Resolution #7F.
- ◆ Mrs. Cheryl Balletto answered that she hopes to know the state aid by February 25, 2013.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park asked for a change to policy 0164. A committee report at the end of the meeting would be time saving and should move to the front of the meeting.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that he would join in moving the reports.
- ◆ Mrs. Esther Han Silver thought it would help facilitate the discussion.
- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever, board attorney stated that going into a committee is a first draft.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that there are a number of incidents outside the district that need to be addressed. We have not received any input from the superintendent.
- ◆ Mr. Peter Suh stated that he doesn't want to over exert ourselves and would like to hear from the board before making a decision. He wants our administrators on board.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that these are not developed by us but by Strauss Esmay. Do you agree with pulling the policies?
- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever, board attorney stated they will look at policies for QSAC. The Policy Committee should review the mandated policies. They write them and you adopt them.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that we have distributed the password to the board members to see the new policies updated. We should pull Resolution #1POL for the February 25, 2013 meeting.

- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever, board attorney stated that the Policy Committee could bring ideas to the full board, at the Work Session.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated it could be a priority and he would like to test run the policy before the end of the year.
- ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell stated that her problem is in the absence of the Superintendent and that there are certain items sitting on his desk that could be hindering the district if not looked at. Could the Assistant Superintendent look at these items?
- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever, board attorney stated yes, the administration of the schools needs to continue.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the Executive Session and Regular Business Meeting on Monday January 28, 2013 were approved.

	Motion by Mr. Peter Suh	Seconded by Mrs. Candace Romba
	The minutes from the Executive Session and Regular Business Meeting on Monday, January 28, 2013	On roll call, Motion carried. Mr. Carmelo Luppino Jr. and Ms. Helen Yoon were absent.

9. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS LISTED ON TONIGHT'S AGENDA AND ANY OTHER TOPIC OF CONCERN

- ◆ Mrs. Nancy Stern stated that the Goal Setting meeting was cancelled and has it been rescheduled and how will you address it so late in the year. Will you be discussing Charter Schools? Who is on the Core Standard team which is discussed on the School Board notes? Fort Lee used to have a Public Work Session and this is not one. Why would you take action at the meeting held by the borough? The Bills list has no numbers and is ridiculous. Look at agendas from the past. Unfortunately the Superintendent is not here. Has the Finance Committee discussed CAPS for the Superintendent and asking for a change for the board to consider? Will you bring back custodians?
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park answered that the Goal Setting meeting will be rescheduled.
- ◆ Mrs. Cheryl Balletto stated that she put action in case they vote.
- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever, board attorney stated that we need to put it on a notice to be able to vote.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that he didn't have a chance to work on Charter Schools.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that we will work on it for the next meeting and will write it.
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that one already exists.
- ◆ Mrs. Nancy Stern stated that the resolutions go the governor and it takes a stance.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that it is the responsibility of the Superintendent and he has not received a response on the Core Standard team.
- ◆ Dr. Sharon Amato stated that she didn't hear anything.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff asked if there is another function if the Superintendent does not do things?
- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever, board attorney stated that the CSA can delegate and doesn't know what the penalty is by the Superintendent not acting. It is problematic.
- ◆ Mrs. Nancy Stern stated that policies can come from the Policy Committee.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that it was him who did the policies.
- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever, board attorney stated that other boards have a Public Work Session. When you have a Work Session and know what you want to accomplish, there is no reason to invent the wheel.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that he would like to reach out to you on the public work session.
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that there is a bump in the road and we will talk about the CAP issue. In his opinion he doesn't want to go over the CAP.
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba stated that it makes her crazy that they have to ask questions all at once.

- ◆ Ms. Bruna Capalbo introduced herself and she was here to discuss negotiations. She spoke to Mrs. Balletto to obtain scattergrams. The Horizontal movement needs to be completed. Thanksgiving came and went and in December and January she didn't receive them. The committee reviewed attorney proposals and it went to bid. The association would receive a scattergram. There has been no response to a letter. We want to start with the negotiations. There was a meeting proposed to discuss the two month extension. The attorney spoke with Mr. Danzig. When will we provide the scattergram to sign? Mr. Morell supports your group and organization to teach respect. Moving forward she would like to be a part of input to policies.
- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever, board attorney stated that since January 11, 2013 there is a lot of information and we have reached out to Mr. Danzig. Once we have dates we will send out a scattergram. Once approved by a committee then we get a copy in February.
- ◆ Mr. Howard Pearl stated that it was an honor that his children had Ms. Cabalbo. She works hard like many of our teachers. People complain that the board members aren't at the meetings. Mr. Park, Mr. Sarnoff, Mrs. Han Silver, and Dr. Amato were there. We need to work on the fundraiser policy for schools. Maybe we should go back to activity fees. He wrote a letter to the board about an emergency situation. We have an absent Superintendent and we should go to the county and give Dr. Amato powers temporarily. He will donate time for plumbing and Mr. Silver may have an electrician to help with the donation of the ice machine. We need ice for injuries and drinks at the games. To buy ice is embarrassing. If it's no, then tell him so he can take further steps.
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that the B&G Committee is recommending not to buy an ice machine because of the cost and the trainer is getting along with the programs. The total cost is \$7,000.
- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever, board attorney stated that from a permit perspective he doesn't know what is allowed. It is possible to accept as a donation but first we need quotes and what is the scope of the project.
- ◆ Mr. Howard Pearl stated that he offered to raise money and donate the help of a plumber.
- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever, board attorney stated that we can get someone to do the job with a prevailing wage.
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that if the ice machine is not locked or secured someone can go into it? There is a space issue to put the machine.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that only a handful of people have keys and would have access to it.
- ◆ Mr. Tom Myers stated that he was on the council in the late 90's and Mr. Romondo donated his service. I am a lifelong resident trying to help children and I am constantly against walls. I won because I have tried for many years doing programs in school about films. We used \$10,000 of our money and we need your support. He asked Mr. Joseph Surace if he would be coming to the dinner or donate \$15.00? They went to see Godspell and meet the cast. On March 8, 2013 the students can enter the film festival. Why aren't these programs in the media to get college credits?
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that this board supports the arts. We are dealing with challenging things.
- ◆ Mr. Tom Myers stated that we brought in Peter Leto from Law and Order. We are losing teachers and we lost Dan Ward. We encourage the board to see what is going on. We restored film, and sent a disc Robin Hood here. It is like talking to paper. Keystone Studios shot here by School #3 in 1912 and why couldn't we have someone from the media department now? When will we change?
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba stated that she feels the same. We have an ADHOC and would like to sit with you. We went bowling and only three students came.
- ◆ Mr. Tom Myers stated that we are not accessing our history. We raised \$1,000 to the drama department and the biggest name in Fort Lee has no support. We need to find space for the students to practice.
- ◆ Mrs. Mildred Federico stated that the board built a dance studio.
- ◆ Dr. Sharon Amato stated that down at the end of the hall there is a room that can be used as a dance studio, but the students will need supervision.

- ◆ Mrs. Aida Garcia asked when will the people of Fort Lee going to be released from the hostage of the superintendent. The superintendent is going to places and throwing the mayor under the bus. We need to move on and stop leaving paper on the desk. The time has come.
- ◆ Mrs. Paula Colbath asked if we can have students do filming of the meetings and have Time Warner meet with students. The budget has two million dollars surplus. The superintendent shouldn't write an obituary of the district being on life support and is a no show at Central Office. I know he is being docked. I don't think he should get tenure and we need to write a letter to the governor and the commissioner. Decisions are to be made by CSA and get something done. I think the governor and the commissioner should suspend the superintendent. She was told on February 1, 2013 to meet on February 7, 2013. Mr. Engravalle was sick and out. This started last July and now it is half way through February. Please write a letter that the school district is at risk. We should call Patch.com about Math team. Mr. Engravalle didn't say great things about the district.
- ◆ Ms. Laurie Dutta stated that she brought up her leave and the Superintendent has not called me back. The Assistant Superintendent did call her. I have text messages from the Superintendent stating that he will call but hasn't. He is not in Fort Lee and is not for our children's best interest. The school year is almost over. When will this change. I was going to take my daughter out of French Horn Class because the fourth grade is hard. The teacher called and asked me to reconsider keeping her in the class.
- ◆ Mr. Paul Umrichin stated that Mr. Howard Pearl has been fighting for ice machines and it will benefit every team. His wife ran on the field as an EMT and there was no ice.
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that he shouldn't say things that aren't true.

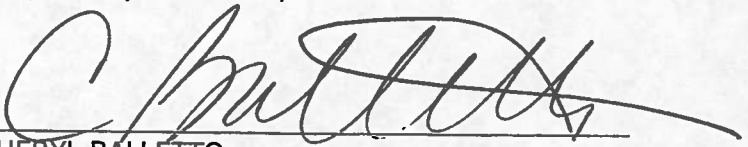
10. **RESOLUTIONS AND REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Personnel			
#1P	APPROVAL OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND VOLUNTARY TRANSFER OF ROBERT RAFFAELE AS AIDE AND RESIGNATION AS ESDP AIDE AT SCHOOL NO. 1		
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Motion by Mr. David Sarnoff To Approve #1P</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Seconded by Mrs. Esther Han Silver On roll call, Motion carried. Mr. Carmelo Luppino Jr. and Ms. Helen Yoon were absent.</td> </tr> </table>	Motion by Mr. David Sarnoff To Approve #1P	Seconded by Mrs. Esther Han Silver On roll call, Motion carried. Mr. Carmelo Luppino Jr. and Ms. Helen Yoon were absent.
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11. At approximately 10:35 PM, Mr. David Sarnoff, offered, Mr. Peter Suh, seconded by, to adjourn the Public Work Session. On voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

Roll calls and resolutions of this meeting are attached.

Respectfully submitted,



 CHERYL BALLETO
 BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY

CB/mp
Att.
2-13-13