

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

MINUTES – PUBLIC WORK SESSION

Monday, March 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 8:20 PM by Mr. Yusang Park, President of the Fort Lee Board of Education.

2. Mrs. Esther Han Silver led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT**

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.

During the course of the board meeting, the Fort Lee Board of Education offers members of the public an opportunity to address issues regarding the operation of the Fort Lee Public Schools. The Board reminds those individuals who take this opportunity to identify themselves by name and address and to limit their comments to items listed on the agenda and/or items directly related to the operation of the School District. Issues raised by members of the public may or may not be responded to by the Board. All comments will be considered and a response will be forthcoming if and when appropriate. The Board asks all members of the public to be courteous and mindful of the rights of other individuals when speaking. Specifically, comments regarding students and employees of the Board are discouraged and will not be responded to by the Board. Students and employees have specific legal rights afforded by the laws of New Jersey. The Board bears no responsibility nor will it be liable for any comments made by members of the public. Members of the public should consider their comment in light of the legal rights of those affected or identified in their comments and be aware that they are legally responsible and liable for their comments.

4. **ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Mrs. Esther Han Silver, Mrs. Holly Morell, Mrs. Candace Romba, Mr. David Sarnoff, Mr. Joseph Surace (left approximately 11:00 pm) and Mr. Yusang Park

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

ABSENT: Mr. Carmelo Luppino, Jr., Mr. Peter Suh and Ms. Helen Yoon

5. PRIVATE WORK SESSION**6. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

- ◆ Dr. Sharon Amato discussed the following:
- ◆ There is a decrease shown in the Midyear Violence and Vandalism.
- ◆ The district has expanded tutoring Programs.
- ◆ Three-year Technology Program
- ◆ Formed Core Curriculum Team
- ◆ AOF Basketball is this Saturday.
- ◆ All Star vs. Harlem Wizards
- ◆ National Pi Day
- ◆ Middle School Benchmark testing.

7. PUBLIC WORK SESSION

- ◆ The locations for the Board Meeting was discussed – High School Library, High School Auditorium and School #1 Library.
- ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell said she preferred the School #1 Library but understands the High School is larger. The acoustics are bad and you can't see each other. She doesn't know why the Board meetings have left School #1.
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that the Library at the High School is good. The acoustics are good and if you need a larger room we can meet in the auditorium. More people can fit in the High School Library than the Library at School #1.
- ◆ Mrs. Esther Han Silver stated that she preferred this set up because you can hear and see everyone.
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba stated definitely here because you can hear people talking and sometimes would stand in the halls at School #1.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that this is a comfortable room and costs less.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that there is better parking at the High School than School #1. Do you feel there is a need for microphones?
- ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell said she liked the new set up.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that for the purpose of taping the board meetings at the High School the meetings are better here than to explore using a few hundred of dollars.
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba stated that the public should be able to hear and agree on the expenses.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that he directed Cheryl to get quotes and discuss the format of the Work Session to reduce the confusion using bullet points on major issues.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that he is confused by the blanks if they are missing numbers and if they are not listed for public discussion. There needs to be a separate page of what will be on the next agenda.
- ◆ Mrs. Esther Han Silver stated that she would clarify it by calling it items for discussion and not have the same format that will have final numbers included.
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that there should be a consent agenda instead of it being done separately.
- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever stated that he does not encourage having one resolution.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that other districts put a statement of items from tonight's meeting which has benefited the students.
- ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell stated that we should always ask and give 100% to benefit the children.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that he directed Cheryl to put together a sample.
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba said yes we can take accept this agenda, redo it and then send it out.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park asked about the Goals for 2012-2013.

- ◆ Dr. Sharon Amato stated that she looked at all the initiatives and filled out a grid and had reviewed the Action Plan. She is having the principals put together a list of staff and their phone numbers.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that his cell phone didn't work and the Borough has an AM radio system for alerts.
- ◆ Dr. Sharon Amato talked about the School Calendar, and said the construction will be going on this summer, along with new teacher orientation. She also reviewed the calendar.
- ◆ Mrs. Cheryl Balletto introduced the preliminary budget.
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba stated that \$125,000 is fine.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that \$150,000 used for cameras would be fine if tied to the Fort Lee Police Department. Do we need releases if the students are taped?
- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever stated that it depends on if you are broadcasted. Students have a right to privacy where they are broadcasted and with whom.
- ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell stated that money is needed for Technology.
- ◆ Mrs. Esther Han Silver asked if we can put \$22,000 towards the tax levy?
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that the budget constantly moves. Every month we have transfers. There was an article in Patch about the Borough budget. You should have a little reserve in case of an emergency.
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba asked how many teachers are retiring?
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that the Health Insurance increasing. He proposed two additional supervisors.
- ◆ Dr. Sharon Amato stated that the reason they are recommending two additional supervisors is to provide support to the teachers with the new teacher evaluation, and Mentoring Program. We need support for literacy and the number of evaluations have doubled and not at the High School level. We are the largest public school in Bergen County.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated why the High School supervisors were eliminated.
- ◆ Dr. Sharon Amato stated yes the year of the budget cuts were when she had started. Seven supervisors were cut. The principals now will have a new core and the evaluation system has changed. The administration has told me we are very challenged by the new levels of accountability.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff asked would the supervisors offset the outsourcing of professional development. Do we still go outside or should we down size?
- ◆ Dr. Sharon Amato stated that there are different providers out there. We can cut down outsourcing.
- ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell stated that the Personnel Committee recommended this because we hired two supervisors last year and it is fine to hire one for next year if necessary. It is not logical to hire two more after just hiring two. It isn't necessary at this time.
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba stated that if we stretch them they may not be as effective and you want principals in the buildings.
- ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell stated that the High School has already three people who can do more evaluations.
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba stated that the High School needs their own supervisors because there is more staff and students. She agrees with one for now. Other districts have four.
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Surace stated that we shouldn't wait. We need to evaluate the non-tenured.
- ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell stated that the children need books and not share them. We spend on books.
- ◆ Dr. Sharon Amato stated that there are significant achievement gaps and we need training for differentiated instruction.
- ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell stated that she wants to spend money smartly and be fiscally responsible.
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba stated that this may affect students because we never have enough books.

- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that the Preliminary Budget will be on the website.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the Public Work Session, Executive Session and Regular Business Meetings on Monday, February 25, 2013.

	<p>Motion by Mr. Peter Suh The minutes from the Public Work Session, Executive Session and Regular Business Meetings on Monday, February 25, 2013.</p>	<p>Seconded by Mrs. Candace Romba On roll call, Motion carried. Mr. Carmelo Luppino Jr. , Mr. Peter Suh, Mr. Joseph Surace and Ms. Helen Yoon were absent.</p>
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9. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS LISTED ON TONIGHT'S AGENDA AND ANY OTHER TOPIC OF CONCERN

- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that the board has been criticized a long time and now the board members are discussing items.
- ◆ Mr. Paul Umrichin stated that he would like a year not to have a tax increase. He is looking at the school calendar and days due to the construction. He added that December 23rd is a half day. He sympathizes and needs to go on a vacation but because of storm Sandy there is no spring break.
- ◆ Mrs. Mildred Federico stated that the budget hearing is on March 28, 2013 and it is Holy Thursday. Could you tell us of any new programs or cutting of any programs? Is the board happy that they are doing work sessions but are putting blanks on resolutions that are on Work Sessions when time is needed to discuss them for the next board meeting?
- ◆ Mr. Keith Jensen stated that we are all here for the children and we all pay taxes. The most important thing is education. We are asking \$1,000,000 for boilers. We should reach out to local businesses, raise money and have sponsors. If we have cameras the police department would love it. Ask the police department for half the money for the PA system. We should go to the Community Center to find out where to get one for free. The district spent \$30,000 for computers and didn't put the Fort Lee logo on them to cover the Apple logo.
- ◆ Ms. Diane Sicheri asked the board to reconsider the date of the budget since it is a religious day and a night when people can't come. She stated that we should change the meeting to Wednesday, March 27th, 2013. She asked why Mr. Carmelo Luppino was not here since he is the Committee Chair of Buildings and Grounds. How long till the search for a new Superintendent. Is there a time table.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park stated that he will get back to the public.
- ◆ Mr. Howard Pearl stated that raising money from outside sources is a great idea. You have to set up protocol and be efficient. His ice machine project is not on the agenda and he needs some answers. Why isn't Mr. Luppino here at the board meeting?
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba stated that as a part of the B&G Committee she supports the ice machine.
- ◆ Mr. Howard Pearl said Mr. Raferty would like an 80 lb. ice machine. The playground at School #1 is in horrendous shape. He may have a donor for the ice machine due to the budget. It is time to move forward. He is not in favor of a Superintendent search. Dr. Amato has been here for a while and we should give her a chance in the position and then talk about a search. It costs money to find someone else that we don't know.
- ◆ Mrs. Candace Romba asked the total cost for the ice machine and asked if the ice machine has a warranty.
- ◆ Ms. Linda Casoria said that on Monday there will be empty classrooms on Election Day because of September 11th. We might want to consider giving up Columbus Day. She asked if we can we put this day towards February.

- ◆ A parent stated that we can't get board members email addresses. She stated that we need direct contact with the board members and were told any information would be forwarded to the Board President. My daughter got suspension for three days. Is there a rule in the manual?
- ◆ Mr. Dennis McKeever stated that we can't have a discussion in public. He stated that long term suspension is ten days and is entitled to due process.
- ◆ Mrs. Paula Colbath stated that we can only control 85%. Is there a second Assistant Superintendent or Director of Curriculum?
- ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell said yes.
- ◆ Mrs. Paula Colbath asked if we are spending over \$200,000 somewhere else and what is the approximate dollar amount.
- ◆ Mrs. Cheryl Balletto stated right now 200,000 for supervisors.
- ◆ Mrs. Paula Colbath agreed with Mrs. Holly Morell that we should take steps with the existing supervisors. Is \$200,000 enough.
- ◆ Mrs. Paula Colbath asked if Central Office will be open on Fridays in the summer.
- ◆ Mrs. Esther Han Silver asked if it is mandatory to close for the Teacher's Convention.
- ◆ Mrs. Paula Colbath said that the district should consider alternating February break with April. She asked if there will be a Finance Committee meeting.
- ◆ Mrs. Cheryl Balletto stated yes there was one today.

10. **RESOLUTIONS AND REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Board Committee		
#1B	APPROVAL - STUDENT SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT	
	Motion by Mrs. Holly Morell To Approve #1B	Motion by Mrs. Esther Han Silver On roll call, Motion carried. Mr. Carmelo Luppino, Jr., Mr. Peter Suh, Mr. Joseph Surace and Ms. Helen Yoon were absent.

Curriculum Committee		
#1CUR	APPROVAL - CLASS TRIPS TOTALING \$632.00	
#2CUR	APPROVAL - ATTENDANCE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP FOR BOARD MEMBERS MRS. ESTHER HAN SILVER AND MRS. HOLLY MORELL AT NO COST TO THE DISTRICT	
	Motion by Mr. David Sarnoff To Approve #1CUR & 2CUR	Seconded by Mrs. Holly Morell On roll call, Motion carried. Resolution #2CUR, Mrs. Esther Han Silver and Mrs. Holly Morell abstained from their names. Mr. Carmelo Luppino, Jr., Mr. Peter Suh, Mr. Joseph Surace and Ms. Helen Yoon were absent.

Finance		
#1F	APPROVAL - PAYMENT OF PERS CONTRIBUTION	
	Motion by Mr. David Sarnoff To Approve #1F	Seconded by Mrs. Candace Romba On roll call, Motion carried. Mr. Carmelo Luppino, Jr., Mr. Peter Suh, Mr. Joseph Surace and Ms. Helen Yoon were absent.


Personnel		
#1P	APPROVAL - STAFF TRIPS AND CONFERENCES TOTALING \$1,801.20	
#2P	APPROVAL - RETIREMENT OF ARLENE DUKETTE AS ELEMENTARY TEACHER AT SCHOOL NO. 2	
#3P	APPROVAL - RETIREMENT OF ARLENE BRANTNER AS ELEMENTARY ART TEACHER AT SCHOOL NO. 3	
#4P	APPROVAL - RETIREMENT OF ROSE SANTORELLI AS SECRETARY AT SCHOOL NO. 1	
#5P	APPROVAL - RETIREMENT OF SUSAN PIERI AS ELEMENTARY TEACHER AT SCHOOL NO. 3	
#6P	APPROVAL - RETIREMENT OF LESLIE ENGLEBERG AS ELEMENTARY TEACHER AT SCHOOL NO. 1	
#7P	APPROVAL - RETIREMENT OF GHAZI ABOUIED AS CUSTODIAN AT SCHOOL NO. 3	
#8P	APPROVAL - APPOINTMENT OF VANDA SORRENTINO AS ESDP AIDE AT SCHOOL NO. 1	
#9P PULLED	APPROVAL - TERMINATION OF DAMIRA MIHATOV AS CLASSROOM AIDE AT SCHOOL NO. 3	
#10P	APPROVAL - TRANSFER OF SALMA SALLOUM FROM PART-TIME TO FULL-TIME BSI TEACHER AT SCHOOL NO. 3	
#11P	APPROVAL - APPOINTMENT OF ADDITIONAL SUBSTITUTES FOR 2012-2013	
#12P	APPROVAL - RETIREMENT OF THEODORA JACKSON AS 10-MONTH SENIOR SECRETARY AT SCHOOL NO. 3	
#13P	APPROVAL - RETIREMENT OF LESLIE GREENBERG AS ELEMENTARY TEACHER AT SCHOOL NO. 3	
	Motion by Mrs. Holly Morell To Approve #1P - #13P Resolution #9P Pulled	Seconded by Mrs. Esther Han Silver On roll call, Motion carried. Mr. Carmelo Luppino, Jr., Mr. Peter Suh, Mr. Joseph Surace and Ms. Helen Yoon were absent.

11. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

- ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell stated that the Personnel Committee met two times but mainly it was confidential.
 - ◆ Mrs. Holly Morell stated that the Negotiations Committee met and will have another meeting on March 18, 2013 and will anticipate inviting the FLEA.
 - ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff stated that he welcomed Mrs. Candace Romba to the Committee meeting. The committee reviewed the proposal for the three-year Technology Plan which will include a WIFI in every classroom, café and gym and will be in compliance with standard tests on line. There is money in the budget and they are looking for grants. Security will include digital cameras in conjunction with the Fort Lee Police Department. He is waiting for the final financial proposals.
12. At approximately 10:50 PM, Mrs. Holly Morell, offered, Mr. David Sarnoff seconded by, to adjourn the Public Work Session and go into the Private Work Session. The board will return to public at approximately 12:00am. On voice vote, motion carried unanimously.
13. At approximately 12:03 AM the Board of Education readjourned into the Public Work Session
14. At approximately 12:30 PM, Mr. David Sarnoff, offered, Mrs. Candace Romba, 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 BALLETT
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY

CB/mp
Att.
3-18-13