

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

MINUTES – SPECIAL PUBLIC BUSINESS MEETING

Thursday, October 27, 2011

Library, School No. 1 – 250 Hoym St.

1. The Public Work Session was called to order at 6:01 PM by Mr. Arthur Levine, President of the Fort Lee Board of Education.
2. Mr. Carmelo Luppino, Jr. led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
3. Public Announcement by the President of the Fort Lee 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: 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.
4. **ROLL CALL**
PRESENT: Mr. John Bang, Mr. Carmelo Luppino, Jr., Mrs. Angela Napolitano, Mr. Yusang Park, Mr. Joseph Surace, Ms. Helen Yoon and Mr. Arthur W. Levine

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Steven Engravalle, Mrs. Cheryl Balletto, and Mr. Matthew J. Giacobbe, Esq.

ABSENT: Mrs. Linda McCue and Mr. Peter Suh
5. **SPECIAL PUBLIC WORK SESSION**
 - ◆ Mrs. Ada Garcia read a letter on behalf of Mrs. Paula Colbath and expressed that the public should save their comments till the new Superintendent is permanent. The normal period is three to six months or a year when someone is not permitted to enter into a contract until after April. Should the Superintendent give 90-100 days notice? Does a new Superintendent have a waiting period of a year to start? The resolution last time states that there is no pay. This is an important decision and we should actively seek the best candidate. It is helpful to understand the process. What did the board do to review an interim? The list is on NJSBA. What happens to the interim if he is not permanent? Would there be a new Assistant Superintendent and how would this work in the long run.
 - ◆ Mr. Arthur Levine stated that we will look at the interim list.
 - ◆ Mr. John Bang stated that we will listen to the community and we shouldn't form an opinion unless we hear from you.
 - ◆ Mr. Carmelo Luppino asked what is the statute?
 - ◆ Mr. Matthew Giacobbe stated that the NJSBA Attorney Board acts upon the recommendation of the Superintendent. The NJSBA has a list and is approved by the County Superintendent, the Executive of the Board of Education. They have powers that the boards rely on. The Board's option is to choose an acting or interim Superintendent. The Board has riced employees and who have opted for a closed session.

- ◆ Mr. Carmelo Luppino stated that we should hear from the public.
- ◆ Ms. Paige Saltano stated that she thought about the Assistant Superintendent and you should take notes.
- ◆ Dr. Nina Levinson stated that she has a number of attributes for a Superintendent, Acting Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendent. We need someone with experience and has worked with this size budget, a leader who listens to others and asks for their opinion. We need someone who respects others, never bullies and doesn't interrogate students. Also, we need someone with experience running a large Prekindergarten through the 12th grade. Lawsuits are distracting and there is a need for Technology, innovation, vision and ingenuity.
- ◆ Mr. Yusang Park asked to have a list of people.
- ◆ Mrs. Cheryl Balletto said they are: Sharon Amato, John Coviello, Jay Berman and Steven Engravalle.
- ◆ Ms. Diane Schicari commented that the way the state of our economy is we should choose a person who meets our needs more with less, handle the budget, and can work with the staff of Prekindergarten to the 12th grade. We need a professional. The future is in your hands. We will guide this through the referendum if you are having it. The budget only passed by three votes. We don't feel it's in our best interest at heart when you don't listen.
- ◆ Ms. Stephanie Coslow stated that we need better communication and look at the lessons learned. We learn from our failures. Moving forward we need better communication and in both directions. We need someone with great communication skills and fundraiser capabilities. Do we get much money from the state? What other money and what other ways can we get it?
- ◆ Mrs. Tracey Mattei stated that she supports Steven Engravalle as Interim/Acting Superintendent. We have 13 days and it's improper to do a meeting now, unless we are hiring. Steven Engravalle has an excellent communication with the PTA in School #4. He met with the PTA for four hours. He brought us national, international and heads the State Committee of Technology. We need stability for our district. We need a strong leader and I believe Steven Engravalle is it. I wish the board can act together.
- ◆ Ms. Carol Simon stated that she supports Steven Engravalle as the Acting Superintendent. He appears to be motivated and has great communication skills. Dr. Bandlow needs to give an opinion. He has a proven record. He is the one to begin and see if Mr. Engravalle is ready. We should give him a shot.
- ◆ Mr. David Sarnoff asked if there is a date or is it open ended?
- ◆ Mr. Matthew Giacobbe stated that Steven Engravalle has been a one year contract to June 30, 2012. This can be only approved through the county. The maximum is two years Interim and the Executive County Superintendent wants to see a permanent Superintendent.
- ◆ Mr. Arthur Levine stated that we will discuss the possibilities.
- ◆ Mr. Paul Umrchin stated that he is in favor of Steven Engravalle and trial by fire. He has to prove himself in a position to work harder and make his career. We have one year with him and we don't need to spend \$180,000.
- ◆ Ms. Alyssa Kleinfeld stated that we should watch what Mr. Engravalle did at the High School and with Mrs. Church. Why change anything when he has a great spirit. Then we are back to square one. I can't say enough good things.
- ◆ Mr. Bill Mattei stated that 13 days will go quick. Why will pay \$1,000 a day. Steven Engravalle was hired as an Assistant Superintendent and deserves a shot and he is doing a great job.
- ◆ Mr. Doug Sugarman stated that he listened to the comments and applauded the board to open up but it is not necessary when the head leaves and the second in command takes over. We need to save money and he is faced to be an autopilot as Acting/Interim Superintendent. The board needs to take action and exercise its authority to appoint an Acting/Interim Superintendent during the search and operate in a smooth manner.

- ◆ Ms. Christina Yoo stated that she has two children and now seeing that one more Superintendent is going through the Board of Education failed. We should look for a person with character. We need a person who will affect my children for the rest of their lives. Please look into every single fact, and don't just put numbers to work. Do everything possible, if not I will move.
 - ◆ Ms. Ada Garcia stated that alot of people have lost and we want the schools to succeed. We hear that we don't care in the south end of town. No one has said Mr. Engravalle should not be Acting Superintendent. There should be a process and just not the next person in command. The big question is should we hand over the keys to someone who filed bankruptcy?
 - ◆ Mr. John Bang said thank you for coming and thought it would be more drama. The board did make an effort for better communication.
6. At approximately 7:25pm Mr. Joseph Surace, offered, seconded by Mr. Carmelo Luppino, to adjourn to the Special Public Work Session and enter into a Special Private Work Session to discuss the Acting Superintendent. On voice vote, motion carried unanimously.
7. Roll call of this meeting is attached.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Balletto
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

CB/mp
10/12/11