

**WEST WINDSOR-PLAINSBORO REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES**



<u>BOE Committee:</u> Louisa Ho (Chair) Scott Powell Yu "Taylor" Zhong (arrived at 7:22 PM)	<u>Administration:</u> David Aderhold Larry Shanok Lawrence LoCastro	<u>Guest/Public:</u> Shannon Martin Colette Ferro
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**April 19, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM at the Central Office. Topics covered included:

Community Education Proposal: All school district EDP/summer camp activities have been exempt from licensing; however, pending regulations would require districts to hold a license not previously needed to continue to participate in a subsidy program. Only 18 of 806 children served are eligible for the subsidy and the governmental rules are so demanding that not all eligible families follow through to achieve the subsidy. If the district seeks to retain access to the subsidy, the district will have to reduce the number of children it now serves or seek to add a considerable number of staffers. Community Education shared an analysis that demonstrates that additional costs exceed the potential subsidy.

The district can continue to serve its present numbers successfully, without continued access to the subsidy. The administration will make a decision at a time closer to final rules taking effect. Tonight allowed the committee to explore the dimensions of the situation and offer input to the Community Education staff.

Review Agenda Items: The agenda items were reviewed and the committee supports board approval. Among the agenda items are renewals for Aramark and Edvocate relating to facilities. Aramark will be entering the previously negotiated second year of the recent contract. The current Aramark head of district operations is leaving to serve an Aramark college client in New York. Succeeding Jim Dean is David Leeds. David has been in the district for Aramark all six years of their service in the district and is well regarded among district administrators.

Examination of the Report of the Secretary shows that available balance remains strong. During the budget presentations a number of budget areas have been kept stable – this does not mean that spending has not increased. Several areas were noted in which year to date spending is well ahead of a year ago. These areas include regular instruction in which YTD is two million dollars ahead of a year ago. Other higher spending areas include: special education instruction, co-curricular activities, guidance, improvement of instruction and school administration.

2016-2017 Budget Progress: Two events that are part of the annual budget cycle are taking place now. The State of New Jersey has just published the 2016 Taxpayers Guide to Education Spending. For the first time actual per pupil data is available for the 2014-2015 school year. It illustrates the district's continuing success at inhibiting the rate of increase in spending. Over the past dozen years, the district's per pupil spending has increased by \$2,448. Ewing, Hamilton and Lawrence have increased by more than \$4,000 and Princeton, Montgomery and Hopewell Valley have increased by more than \$6,000 in that same time period.

This week districts are publishing their Advertised Budgets as required by law in anticipation of their Public Hearing. Forty-eight hours after the Public Hearing, the district's User Friendly Budget will be posted on its website. The User Friendly Budget contains much of the data contained in the Advertised Budget.

Mr. Shanok reviewed a pro forma analysis of teacher employee health contributions. The past four years has seen the phase in of the Chapter 78 law on employee contributions. Some teachers have seen a rough balance between salary guide movement and increased contributions; some employees have seen salary increases larger than the increase in contributions; and, some teachers have seen contributions that exceed the increase in salary guide. The analysis showed that for family benefits, total premiums exceed \$30,000. For a 10% increase in total premiums most employees will pay about \$700 of the \$3,000 increase – the district will pay \$2,300.

Bond Refunding – Summer 2017: The district’s financial advisors have been talking of the next bond refunding. The previous bond refunding achieved total present value savings of \$2,341,168. However, assuming interest rates stay favorable, the district will not have eligible bonds until the summer of 2017. So, steps to implement the next refunding are at least a year away.

Lunch Pricing: The committee shared in the current thinking about a food service budget for 2016-2017 in conjunction with Sodexo. Consideration is being given to using more environmentally friendly lunch trays at a higher cost. The current consideration is to increase K-5 lunches by a nickel and since the same lunch is served at both the middle and high schools, to charge the high school lunch price at both. The administration will be finalizing a budget; and, afterwards, the recommendation to the Board of Education for lunch prices will appear on the agenda. These lunch prices are still below the lunch prices at most of the other area school districts.

Other Business: The committee asked for news concerning that day’s tragedy in Robbinsville. Superintendent Steve Mayer was an extraordinary person and an exceptional educator and will be missed. The Superintendent noted the actions being taken to support Robbinsville students and staff.

The committee also inquired about the water testing. The Superintendent noted that while no written reports have been received by the district, unofficial results for High School North have been phoned to the district. North’s 15 tests all were below the threshold of concern. That makes 125 of the 130 tests below the threshold. The second round of tests at the five locations will conclude on Wednesday.

The Superintendent noted disappointment with the recent RFP solicitation for Strategic Planning: only two responses were received. The committee urged the district to expand the pool of potential planners before deciding upon a consultant for the task.

Mr. LoCastro and Shanok departed the meeting. The meeting moved to closed session at 9:10 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 P.M.

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, May 17, 2016, 7:30 PM @ Central Office**

Topic for Next Meeting  
Review Agenda Items  
2016-2017 Budget  
Capital Reserve

Future Topics:  
Impact of Recent Legislation  
Policies  
Transportation