

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING  
FOR THE PURPOSE OF A BOARD RETREAT HELD  
December 20, 2017**

In accordance with the State’s Sunshine Law, adequate notice of this Special Meeting was provided by sending a notice of the time, date, location, and, to the extent known, the agenda of this meeting on December 15, 2017, to The Princeton Packet, The Times, The Home News Tribune, and West Windsor and Plainsboro Public Libraries. Copies of the notice also have been placed in the Board Office and in each of the district schools on December 15, 2017, and sent to Plainsboro and West Windsor Township clerks on December 15, 2017.

The Special Meeting of the West Windsor-Plainsboro Board of Education was called to order by Board President Fleres at 6:30 p.m. in the multipurpose room at the District Administration Building. The following Board members were present:

Mr. Anthony Fleres	Ms. Louisa Ho	Ms. Dana Krug
Mr. Isaac Cheng	Ms. Michele Kaish	Mr. Yingchao “YZ” Zhang

Board Members Herts, Juliana, and Zhong were absent. Present also were: Dr. David Aderhold, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Christopher Russo, Assistant Superintendent for Finance/Board Secretary; and, Mr. Gerard Dalton, Assistant Superintendent, Pupil Services/Planning. Newly elected Board member Martin Whitfield attended as a guest.

**Welcome/Review Purpose and Outcomes**

Mr. Fleres thanked Mr. Zhang for his service to the board of education and wished him well in his future endeavors.

The Superintendent welcomed everyone to the 2018-2019 budget build retreat. He gave a special thanks to YZ Zhang for his years of service to the district and welcomed incoming Board of Education member Martin Whitfield.

Dr. Aderhold reviewed the topics to be covered this evening, including school security, residential growth, debt structure, and budget parameters. The Superintendent discussed a variety of budget topics, including: what a school budget entails; the budget process and timelines; big picture budget topics; and other cost factors. He mentioned that state aid is often not known until late in the process and that the January 2019 medical plan premium increase will be an unknown factor. Upcoming negotiations also need to be considered. He reviewed the District’s mission statement and goals and how they relate to the creation of a successful budget.

Mr. Zhong arrived at approximately 6:45 P.M.

**Security:**

Gerard Dalton reviewed the security needs of the District. The District does a great job with door access and with security drills. Representatives from the State have reviewed our drills on-site and have commented positively. We need to improve our emergency communication and notification systems.

### Residential Growth and COAH:

The superintendent updated the Board on expected residential growth. The projects discussed that have approval granted or pending approval were: the Princeton Theological Seminary property, the Maneely Property, The Ellsworth Center, in West Windsor and in Plainsboro: the Princeton Forrestal Village.

Plans that have determinations pending in West Windsor are: The Ellsworth II property, Transit Village, The Lowes Center, and the Thompson property. In Plainsboro, the Dey Road property was discussed.

The superintendent shared information regarding the expected settlements between the communities and the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH). The District will need expansion at several schools.

He discussed the challenges the above mentioned development will create. Also discussed was the issue that several of our current buildings are or over capacity currently.

The superintendent shared information about the expansion that is happening at the Maurice Hawk Elementary School. He shared information about the plans for possible expansion that is currently needed including at the following schools; Thomas Grover Middle School, the High School South, and Town Center.

### Debt Structure, Referendum, and ESIP:

Dr. Russo shared information regarding the declining debt structure and how an Energy Saving Improvement Plan (ESIP) works. The improvements to the District's facilities through an ESIP result in a zero increase in the tax levy and allow for energy saving improvements to occur with no competition for instructional dollars. Projects are self-funded from the energy budget as it exists today. The District's debt declines substantially in the year 2022, then again in 2026 and 2028. There is a need for work to the facilities. This declining debt will allow the district to go to referendum for as much as \$70 plus million dollars while maintaining our current debt structure and no increase in the tax levy. By using an ESIP combined with a facilities referendum, the District can leverage current budgeted funds into a project as large as \$90 million, again without affecting the tax levy.

Dr.'s Aderhold and Russo shared a plan for facility improvements that would replace obsolete mechanical equipment, improve the building environment, and increase building capacity and programmatic offerings. The need for projects was discussed and debated. In the end all members present supported continued work toward a referendum and ESIP project.

### Budget Parameters:

Dr.'s Aderhold and Russo shared information about the 18-19 budget process. The normal "cost drivers" are still there such as health benefits, salaries, special education, staff increases, technology improvements, capital projects and a new one, the possible minimum wage being raised to \$15 per hour. It is likely that State Aid will be released as late as mid-March. Negotiations will need to be considered when working on the 18-19 budget.

Dr. Russo discussed general fund trends. These highlight the often multiyear perspective taken within a specific budget year. Net health benefit costs to the district over the last four years have seen small percentage increases – not due to low premium costs, but due to increasing employee contributions

toward health costs. Last year employees contributed almost \$4.7 million of total premiums of nearly \$24 million. These contributions are fully phased in and the district will be responsible for about 80% of future increases. Despite the mildness of the growth in the last four years, 7 of the last 15 years have seen double digit moves in net cost to the district. Exclude the last four years as abnormal with the phase-in of employee contributions, and that is 7 of 11 years of double digit moves. Other general fund expenditure categories display similar variability.

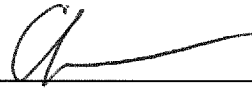
At 10:30 PM by a motion by Mr. Zhong, seconded by Mr. Cheng, and supported unanimously by all present, the Board of Education meeting was extended by one hour.

**Closing**

The Superintendent and Mr. Fleres thanked everyone for their participation.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Zhang and seconded by Ms. Krug. All Board members that were present voted in favor of adjourning the meeting.

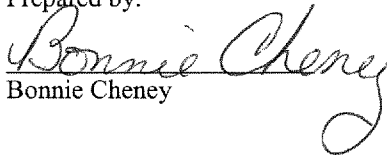
The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:05 p.m.



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Christopher Russo, Board Secretary

Prepared by:



Bonnie Cheney

WEST WINDSOR-PLAINSBORO REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING DATE: December 20, 2017  
PLEASE SIGN IN BELOW

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