

**FLEMINGTON-RARITAN REGIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL WORK SESSION MEETING/EXECUTIVE SESSION
JUNE 4, 2014
MINUTES**

The Special Work Session meeting of the Flemington-Raritan Regional Board of Education was called to order in conformance with the "Sunshine Law" by the Board President at 6:08 p.m. in the Media Center at the J.P. Case Middle School.

Members Present

Robin Behn	Marianne Kenny
Sandra Borucki	Eric Liszt
Dennis Copeland	Bruce Davidson
Anna Fallon	

Members Absent

Alan Brewer
Laurie Markowski

Board Attorney Present

Jeff Caccese

CITIZENS ADDRESSED THE BOARD

Mr. Davidson limited the Citizens Address the Board time to a 20 minute session.

Elana Korn, Robert Hunter parent, questioned Mr. Nolan's sincerity and philosophical decision regarding Dr. Hutto's transfer. She feels that it is a terribly bad one since Dr. Hutto will only be at Barley Sheaf for one year. Dr. Hutto will then leave Barley Sheaf and they will have to find another Principal for the following school year. Ms. Korn feels it is unfair to the staff, students and the parents and also stated that the Barley Sheaf parents unfairly judged Dr. Hutto publicly. She believes most of the district does not want this. She wants the Board to vote against this decision; philosophically she feels it's a bad decision.

Karen Alexanderson, Teacher at both Barley Sheaf and Robert Hunter, is very upset with the timing of this decision. She shared all of the upcoming changes for next year. She asked the Board to NOT support this change. She feels this decision will break apart our children's continuity in education.

Patricia Hillebrecht, Teacher at Robert Hunter and a resident, shared she loved the climate at Robert Hunter. She stated the school has not received what it needs, additional support. She feels Dr. Hutto has a vision but Robert Hunter lacks man power. She felt it was unfair to criticize Dr. Hutto publically. She noted how upsetting it is to hear parents struggle amongst each other when we are one district. She finished by sharing a scenario referencing the actual need of manpower and is concerned with the 2 year disruption this change will cause.

Neha Gohil, represents the parents at Barley Sheaf. She supports all the statements previously made. She is most concerned with the timing. She also referenced the upcoming initiatives for next year. She asked that Dr. Hutto be able to retire at her school and allow Ms. Gabruk to continue her work at Barley Sheaf. She wants the Board to consider not approving this change.

Mr. Davidson ended the Citizens Address the Board at 6:31 p.m.

SPECIAL WORK SESSION

Ms. Mary Ann Friedman from the New Jersey School Boards Association presented an Ethics Training. She disseminated a packet of information and began by reviewing the Code of Ethics. Ms. Friedman reviewed that the Board members have no authority unless they are seated. Emails should be one way information and err on the side of caution. She shared the recommended process that if an individual Board Member violates the Code of Ethics after consultation with the individual that puts the district at risk. She then reviewed the Ethics complaint process. Ms. Friedman strongly recommended that each Board Member have a Flemington-Raritan School District email address.

The Board Attorney will need to represent the Board Member if an Ethics complaint is filed.

The Board spoke about the need and legal responsibilities of the Board Members to uphold the Board Policy. The Board reviewed policy making and enforcement. Policies should be broad. Specific actions should be outlined in Regulation.

Dr. Copeland left at 7:33 p.m.

Administration crafts contracts. The Board should make a determination as to what contracts they want to see. The Board operates through a Committee structure. The food issue was discussed and the Boards action with the absence of the contract vs. other vendors that were approved without a contract were reviewed. Mr. Davidson spoke about how we operate through committees and the possibility of posting contracts on a website. Ms. Voorhees spoke about the practicalities of this proposed process.

Ms. Friedman suggested the Board Members facilitate questions through the Board Chairs before a vote. Ms. Voorhees noted that has been our process and that we all agreed to work through the Committee Chairperson before meeting to ask questions. The Chairs will then go to the Administration if needed. If the item is not in a Committee, Board Members can reach out to the Administrator. The Board once again agreed. The Board agreed to request contracts as needed.

The chain of command was discussed. The Board should be the last resort.

Ms. Friedman stated confidentiality is critical and Executive Sessions are extremely confidential. Ms. Friedman reviewed the code regarding political groups. She noted that the Board members must work in the best interest of the children not a political party or those who voted them in.

Ms. Friedman reviewed personnel matters and the need to follow the process. The process is important for the Board to follow. The Board Members cannot speak derogatory about an employee in a public session. The Board President needs to stop those actions or recess the Board. Ms. Friedman also explained that we need to be consistent with allowing Citizens to Address the Board. The Board needs to follow the policy. Ms. Friedman reiterated that the Board Meeting is held in public, it is not a public meeting. The Board agreed to be consistent during the Citizens Address the Board. Ms. Friedman will send us a consistent statement that we can read before Citizens Address the Board stating the length of meeting and that the Board will not be responding. The Board discussed how we would like to communicate and the different venues available. The failure to complete Board training or financial disclosure are ethics violations. Ms. Friedman also briefly explained resources in the packet she distributed.

On the motion of Ms. Fallon, seconded by Ms. Borucki, the meeting was adjourned, unanimously viva voce, at 8:50 p.m. to executive session in the Media Center.

Sunshine Resolution

Be It Resolved, by the Flemington-Raritan Regional Board of Education that it does hereby determine that it is necessary to meet in executive session to discuss the matters stipulated, in conformance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231 P.L. 1975.

Personnel

The matters discussed will be made public when confidentiality is no longer required and formal action pursuant to said discussion shall take place only at a meeting to which the public has been invited.

The Board returned to public session at 8:59 p.m.

ADJOURN

On the motion of Ms. Borucki, seconded by Dr. Kenny, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. viva voce.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Voorhees
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Upcoming Board Meetings

June 16

July 21

August 18

September 15

October 20

November 17

December 15