

PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
May 13, 2010
7:30 p.m.
NEW EGYPT HIGH SCHOOL

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Miller, President, called the meeting to order at 7:34 PM.

II. OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT

In compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act, this is to announce that adequate notice of this meeting has been given in the form of an Annual Notice contained in Resolution No. 2010-1 which Resolution was immediately thereafter posted upon the bulletin board in the main office of all four schools and the Board Secretary's office and disseminated within seven (7) days of passage to the Asbury Park Press, and a copy of such resolution was filed with the Plumsted Township Clerk. No advance written notice of this meeting was requested and paid for by any person according to the record of the Secretary of the Board. I direct the Secretary of the Board to enter into the minutes of this meeting this public announcement.

III. ROLL CALL

Mr. Miller, President	Present
Mr. Hauge, Vice President	Present
Mr. Buckalew	Present
Mr. Marinari	Present
Mr. Midgett	Present
Mr. Probasco	Absent
Mrs. Soles	Present
Dr. DeMareo, Superintendent	Present
Mr. Gripp, Business Administrator/ Board Secretary	Present
Mr. Stein, Board Attorney	Present

IV. FLAG SALUTE

V. PRESENTATION

A. Board of Education and Township Committee - Budget

Mayor Dancer stated there is not going to be any official action this evening but thought it was important that we continue the public process. He informed the public of where we are in process and where we are going from here.

Mayor Dancer commented on the following:

- 4th Public Hearing
- Practice to reduce the taxes without impacting budget
- Having budgets on the fiscal calendar or calendar year
- School district on fiscal year
- Township on calendar year
- Tax sale on properties
- Tax levy and debt service and deferred school taxes
- Impact Aid
- Bussing – safety issue – sidewalks – continuation of bussing in some manner
- Kindergarten
- Personnel – Administrative staffing – Accountant – Technology – staff reductions
- Teachers’ Association opening up contract

Harry Miller commented on the following:

- Defeated tax levy
- Impact Aid – allocation of funding
- Bussing – proposal of subscription bussing
- Kindergarten – complementary academic kindergarten program

Mr. Gripp gave an explanation of subscription bussing.

Dr. DeMareo gave an explanation on the Kindergarten Complement Academic Program.

Mayor Dancer questioned the free or reduced lunch program students for the Kindergarten Program and Bussing.

Dr. DeMareo stated students who qualify for the Title I program; the Board of Education pays the tuition for both.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY SCHOOL RELATED TOPIC

Paul Sullivan commented on the full day kindergarten program and safety of bussing.

Luisa Erich-Carr commented on the deferred taxes and needs clarification.

Mayor Dancer explained debt service and how it will be paid for the next 8 years.

Luisa Erich-Carr commented on legal fees and how much lawsuit is costing and outcome.

Mr. Stein stated the cost was approximately \$16,000 and there was no monetary compensation awarded.

Luisa Erich-Carr stated the legal fees the Board of Education pays are way too high and they need to find ways of not having to call for legal help so much.

Luisa Erich-Carr commented on the Pre-K and ½ day Kindergarten.

Mr. Gripp explained the Pre-K attendance program and reducing costs.

Luisa Erich-Carr stated our sports are 30% higher than other districts around the area. She asked what are we doing with sports and are we going to charge for sports.

Mr. Hauge commented on a formation of a committee that will look for alternative ways of funding all of the activities.

Mr. Miller commented on the task force that will be formed to look beyond this current year as to what we need to do to sustain ability.

Luisa Erich-Carr stated Tony O'Donnell gave her the full detail of last year and this year's budget. She doesn't believe the budget has been done on actual. She commented on the cost of W-2's and report cards.

Mr. Gripp explained the budget is given to all principals and supervisors who are responsible for their cost center. He stated they are provided with a seven (7) year historical data of the account codes they are responsible for showing the overall expenditures in those lines.

Mr. Gripp explained the process of gathering all budget expenditures.

Liz Wetzel commented on the ½ day kindergarten with concerns. She stated she is a single mom of two (2) and \$275 is not in her budget. She urged the Board to reconsider their decision.

Mayor Dancer stated they are not close to making decisions and trying to be as straight forward as we can. He stated there are no predeterminations.

Mr. Miller stated the decisions that were made while trying to develop a budget and go out to propose it to the public were very agonizing decisions and not intended to target any one school or group. He stated it was a painful process.

Glen Jacobus asked if the budget was shot down because of the way it was presented or because people don't want to pay.

Mayor Dancer stated he wasn't sure why and the increase was \$366,000.

Glen Jacobus stated it sounds like the township committee is reinstating other things and taking from Peter to pay Paul.

Mayor Dancer stated they are not putting off paying anything and debt service payments are being paid when due.

Glen Jacobus stated it sounded like the township committee was asking the Board of Education to reinstate bussing or full day kindergarten and if this is the intention, what goal are we working towards.

Mr. Sorchick stated we have not made any decisions and are discussing debt service. He also stated the Board of Education is listening to what the public is saying and trying to find alternative ways to not increase tax levy.

Mr. Hauge stated there were many reasons why the budget was defeated and a lot of it probably has to do with the times. He also stated the communication of the line items in the budget and what was proposed in the budget was not handled well at all. He stated things will be different moving forward.

Anthony Peczink commented on the township looking at the budget and not what is in the budget.

Mayor Dancer stated they always come to a mutual agreement.

Anthony Peczink stated he and his wife voted the budget down and it had nothing to do with the tax levy and had to do with the budget the Board put together. He stated the budget pretty much singles out certain groups and the Board should be fair to all groups.

Anthony Peczink stated he went through the budget and found huge deductions in staffing, teachers, kindergarten program and transportation but small deductions in administration expenses. He asked where Mr. Gripp's contract lies and commented on Dr. DeDeMareo's salary.

Mr. Gripp explained administration line item in the budget and stated it is not just limited to administration salary.

Anthony Peczink asked if the administration staff fell under the teacher's contract.

Mr. Miller stated the administrators are separate.

Dr. DeMareo stated the administrators fall under the Administrative Association and teachers are part of the Plumsted Township Education Association. He stated the administrators are giving back \$5,000 each. He also stated Mr. Gripp has given back \$5,000 and stated he has given back his 5% increase in his salary.

Anthony Peczink asked if there was any talk about administrators contributing to their health care plans.

Mr. Gripp explained the possibility that State Law for all employees in Public Education and State will potentially giveback 1.5% in health care plans. He stated he will have a better understanding in the next month or two.

Mayor Dancer stated the new law will take effect May 21.

Anthony Peczink commented on pay to play sports across the board for all age groups. He also commented on students getting to school safely and education is more important than anything.

Mr. Hauge urged Anthony Peczink to be part of the task force meeting. He stated that other districts are in the same boat as the middle school.

Mr. Hauge commented on administrative costs and future budget planning.

Paul Sullivan asked for information to come available via internet on how to become part of the task force. He also commented on shared services and energy.

Paul Sullivan commented on middle school sports/intramurals and volunteer coaching.

Paul Sullivan commented on the kindergarten complement program and the parent survey.

Community member asked why register in this district when we don't know if kindergarten will be a full or ½ day program.

Dr. DeMareo stated the survey should be going out this week.

Community member stated options should have been talked about months ago and why didn't we have a plan B when we knew in November what was going to happen.

Mr. Hauge stated they tried their best to plan for the worse case scenario.

Luisa Erich-Carr stated they did know that Gov. Christie was going to clean house and you should have been prepared.

Luisa Erich-Carr commented on the administrators giving back a total of \$45,000 and the superintendent giving back 5%.

Dr. DeMareo stated he is giving back 5% for the 2010-2011 school year.

Luisa Erich-Carr asked who the Human Resource person is and are they certified.

Dr. DeMareo stated his department picks up the Human Resource area.

Luisa Erich-Carr commented on the payroll specialist doing the human resource job.

Dr. DeMareo stated he is responsible for the Human Resource department and the Business Office is responsible for the financial issues.

Mr. Gripp stated the superintendent's office and business office work in conjunction to make sure all the proper paperwork is in order.

Luisa Erich-Carr asked what is para?

Dr. DeMareo stated these are paraprofessional for students with IEP's and they are in every school.

Luisa Erich-Carr asked what is self contained?

Dr. DeMareo stated this is special education.

Luisa Erich – Carr asked what is MD para?

Dr. DeMareo stated this is for multiple disabled.

Allen Parcels commended Mr. Hauge for being honest and forthright.

Allen Parcels commented on the third meeting he attended and the communication stunk. He said it is good to know that you are trying to work together. He stated he wants good stuff for the kids.

Monica Semprevive asked if they are reducing the tax levy.

Mayor Dancer responded the tax levy will be reduced.

Robert Latham stated he voted the budget down because he thought they could get back courtesy bussing and full day kindergarten. He thought Impact Aid could take care of courtesy bussing.

Mayor Dancer stated all options are open.

Mayor Dancer commented on hazardous routes.

Mr. Gripp explained the difference between courtesy bussing and hazardous transportation.

Chris Neuert stated we have been paying for the primary school for six years and can't understand how any other obligation comes before this. He asked if there was a second question on the referendum for a full day kindergarten.

Mayor Dancer stated we can check the information and get an answer.

Aaron Heller stated it is a nice gesture for giving back money. He stated the 1.5% is not a big give back.

Aaron Heller asked if anyone had asked the administrators to open up their contracts.

Mr. Hauge stated they have not sat down and officially open negotiations.

Mrs. Soles stated administrators have their own association. She also stated the Superintendent and Business Administrator have independent contracts.

Aaron Heller asked if they looked at the possibility of re-negotiations.

Mr. Stein stated there has been some level of negotiations and the giveback that was mentioned earlier has occurred.

Aaron Heller asked if the teacher association looked to open their contract.

Mr. Stein stated the Board has approached the teachers association about opening their contract.

Wendy Sample asked if there are any other reductions the township would like to see made.

Mayor Dancer stated they are discussing further reductions.

Wendy Sample commented on programs in or out of the budget.

Mayor Dancer stated they will certify an amount to be raised for the general fund.

Wendy Sample stated she has been calling and emailing and is not getting any information on courtesy bussing and the kindergarten program.

Glen Jacobus commented on parents dropping off their kids at the elementary school and how is this going to be controlled. He asked if we are going to hire more crossing guards or police officers.

Mayor Dancer stated they have introduced the township budget and there is no hiring in their budget.

Mr. Gripp explained the procedure for parents to drop off students in the back of the elementary school.

Jim Kimmick commented on the Impact Aid money and what are the security upgrades.

Mr. Gripp explained the security upgrades to take place in the district.

Jim Kimmick commented on the lawsuit that took place and asked Mr. Stein how this took place.

Mr. Stein stated he was not there and explained the situation.

Janet Hauge stated people voted no on the budget because they were hoping to get more. She stated she voted yes on the budget because she knows there will be additional cuts if the budget went down.

Janet Hauge stated she heard the township found a way to reduce from 4% to 2% and she is concerned as to where these cuts are going to be.

Mayor Dancer stated there is no predetermined number or cut. He stated all options are on the table and there is a minimum tax levy. He also stated they should not make reductions greater than \$366,000.

Janet Hauge commented she must have been reading between the lines and she is concerned about additional cuts.

Michele Hladick stated she doesn't see the Board as transparent and comes to the meetings every month. She also stated she knows they start the budget process much early and hopes that parents start coming to the monthly board meetings because you do learn a lot.

Michele Hladick stated there are task forces for parents to join. She also stated she voted yes for the budget and for our schools.

Michele Hladick stated she is concerned the town voted down \$366,000 and the township is up here saying they might put some things back.

Mayor Dancer stated no decisions have been made and they will continue to discuss.

Mr. Sorchik stated what they have discussed so far is the tax levy not the budget.

Carolann Miller commented on the 4% that may be a 2% tax increase. She stated it seems like we are in a stalemate and both sides should make a comment. She also stated she was involved in the budget task force which started last November.

William Lewis stated he voted no and doesn't want our taxes raised.

Sue Homeny stated she thought the debt service and budget were two separate things. She also stated her concern for the additional 2%.

Mayor Dancer gave an explanation of the debt service.

Sue Homeny stated she voted for the budget and she has a concern about the other 2% because she doesn't want to see anything else taken away from the kids and asked what are the new cuts.

Mr. Hauge stated this budget hurt and took away a lot. He stated they are trying to work together and accomplish all of their goals to get the best possible education for the kids in the district.

Glen Jacobus commented on the \$280,000 in security.

Mr. Hauge stated it was their understanding they could not touch those funds; but through the Mayor's connections we may be able to get to a portion of the funds.

Allen Parcels commented on the price we are going to have to pay and a lot of people are considering not living in Plumsted Township anymore. He stated the rules are changing and it is a difficult situation.

Allen Parcels commented on the lowest taxes in the state and they did lousy jobs convincing them to vote.

Joanne Dempsey asked if Mr. Stein could review policy on what happens when you have a defeated tax levy.

Mr. Stein gave an explanation of a defeated tax levy.

Andy Fedora stated he moved here because the taxes are cheap and has seen his tax bill go up about \$1,000 every five (5) years and doesn't see it going down. He stated they are forcing people out of the area and forcing older people to the limit.

Anthony Peczink asked if there is a deadline.

Mr. Gripp explained the process for the deadline.

Mayor Dancer stated May 19 is the deadline for the tax levy. He also stated the budget can be amended through the time the governor signs the state budget.

Mr. Marinari made a motion to adjourn at 11:03 PM.

Seconded by Mrs. Soles, Passed unanimously.