

PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
March 26, 2010
6:30 p.m. Public Session
NEW EGYPT HIGH SCHOOL

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Buckalew, President, called the meeting to order at 6:40 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. 2009-1 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. Buckalew, President	Present
Mr. Miller, Vice President	Present
Mr. Downs	Absent
Mr. O'Donnell	Present
Mrs. Soles	Present
Mr. Hauge	Present
Mr. Probasco	Present
Dr. DeMareo, Superintendent	Present
Mr. Gripp, Business Administrator/ Board Secretary	Present
Mr. Supsie, Board Attorney	Present

Mr. Hauge made a motion to go into executive session at 6:45 PM.
Seconded by Mr. Probasco, Passed unanimously.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Request resolution for Executive Session at this point in the meeting of the Plumsted Township Board of Education on March 26, 2010 for the purpose of discussing contracts and negotiations;

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meeting Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 to 21) permits bodies to discuss certain matters in closed sessions, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has a need to hold a meeting on Unwarranted Invasion of Individual Privacy issues; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Open Public Meeting Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4 – 6-21), such a meeting may be held in private;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that:

1. The Board shall meet in closed session on these matters; and
2. The matters to be discussed in private may be shared with the public at such other time as the Board may determine that there is no longer any requirement for confidentiality.

Mr. Probasco made a motion to go out of executive session at 7:40 PM.
 Seconded by Mr. Hauge, Passed unanimously.

V. ROLL CALL

Mr. Buckalew, President	Present
Mr. Miller, Vice President	Present
Mr. Downs	Absent
Mr. O'Donnell	Present
Mrs. Soles	Present
Mr. Hauge	Present
Mr. Probasco	Present
Dr. DeMareo, Superintendent	Present
Mr. Gripp, Business Administrator/ Board Secretary	Present
Mr. Supsie, Board Attorney	Present

VI. FLAG SALUTE

VII. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Hauge made a motion to approve the workshop meeting agenda for March 17, 2010.
 Seconded by Mr. Miller

Roll Call

Yes	Mr. Hauge, Mr. Miller, Mr. Probasco, Mrs. Soles, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Buckalew
No	None
Absent	Mr. Downs

VIII. DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

A. Board Meeting dates:

The remaining Board of Education meetings will be held:

Workshop meetings

Regular meetings

April 28, 2010 (Reorganization Meeting starts at 7:30 p.m.)

IX. SUPERINTENDENT’S COMMENTS

X. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS

XI. PRESENTATIONS/AWARDS

A. 2010/2011 Budget Presentation by Dr. DeMareo and Frank Gripp

XII. CORRESPONDENCE

XIII. SUPERINTENDENT’S AGENDA

A. Finance Motions

Mr. Hauge made a motion to approve the following:

1. Recommend approval of the budget for the 2010-2011 school year for the submission to the voters as follows:

General Fund Budget:	\$21,982,063
General Fund Tax levy:	\$9,520,736
Special Revenue Fund Budget:	\$464,013
Debt Service Fund budget:	\$2,513,506
Debt Service Fund Tax Levy:	\$1,627,037

There should be raised for General Funds \$9,520,736 for the ensuing school year (2010-2011).

Seconded by Mr. Miller

Discussion: Mr. Hauge stated this is a very painful budget to look at. He also stated the district, town and kids have lost a lot in this budget and there is nobody happy with this budget.

Mr. Hauge stated that a “no” vote on the budget means our kids; district and our town are going to lose more. He also stated we need to pass this budget and protect what we have in town.

Mr. O’Donnell stated this budget is the departure from priorities of the Plumsted Township Board of Education. He also stated that for about 6-7 year we funded a full day kindergarten for all the Plumsted students. Mr. O’Donnell stated the majority of board does not feel this is a priority that we will fund going forward.

Mr. O’Donnell commented on the budget make-up and where did we go. He stated they put a lot of time into it and what he submitted.

Mr. O'Donnell commented on the Comparative Spending Guide.

Mr. O'Donnell stated he will vote "no" because it does not match his priorities but will support when we leave here.

Mr. O'Donnell stated the Board did listen to the Public and is proud of the Board.

Mr. O'Donnell commented on administration positions and funding full day kindergarten. He commented on the technology position, accountant, vice principal position, legal fees and partial pay to play. He stated this would give \$315,000 to reinstate the nurse, full day kindergarten and courtesy bussing.

Mr. O'Donnell commented on courtesy bussing and stated this is an important issue. He commented on the dangerous streets and the safety of our kids.

Mr. O'Donnell stated it would not be the end of the world without a vice principal or accountant for one year.

Mr. O'Donnell stated he cannot support the budget as presented and feels they could have done more.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Hauge, Mr. Miller,
Mr. Probasco, Mrs. Soles,
Mr. Downs, Mr. Buckalew
Mr. O'Donnell

No

Mr. O'Donnell made a motion to approve the following:

2. Recommend approval of the travel expense for the 2010-2011 school year not to exceed \$75,000 and that the maximum amount established in the pre-budget year (2009-2010) was \$75,000.

Seconded by Mr. Miller

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Miller,
Mr. Hauge, Mr. Probasco,
Mrs. Soles, Mr. Downs,
Mr. Buckalew

No

None

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY SCHOOL RELATED TOPIC

Toni Ferry, Principal, stated the Plumsted Township Administrative Association will give back \$45,000 of compensation which amounts to \$5,000 per member from our nine member administrative team which includes: four (4) Principals, two (4) Assistant Principals, one (1) Director of Curriculum & Instruction, one (1) Supervisor of Special Education and one (1) Supervisor of Athletics & Co-Curricular Activities.

Mr. Gripp, Business Administrator, stated he will be giving back \$5,000 of compensation.

Jane Becker stated she is here to ask the teachers to give back to the district for one year and they would be able to reinstate some of the programs. She asked the board to go to the teachers and ask them to open their negotiations of their contract.

Mr. Hauge stated they have been talking to the teachers and the teachers made a statement last night they have not ruled out the possibility.

Jane Becker stated the teachers are not willing to sacrifice and they keep saying they are here for the children. She stated the teachers are being selfish.

Chip Sandy commented on courtesy bussing and stated there are 7 current registered sex offenders in the community. He also stated that getting rid of the courtesy bussing is making the kids targets for the predators.

Chip Sandy commented on the 1.5% benefits and also a salary freeze for the teachers.

Rich Brevogel asked if we looked at the debt service and is there any flexibility there in terms of refinancing and getting better rate.

Mr. Gripp stated we passed a motion last evening. He commented on the refunding and long term debt.

Rich Brevogel commented on shared services and asked if there was any thought in reaching out to other schools and communities.

Rich Brevogel asked if there is a way to put on bids for professional services. He also asked if we can go out and get a fixed price or hourly rate.

Rich Brevogel commented on a shared services committee.

Lisa Rajeski, Vice President of PTEA, stated the PTEA recognizes the efforts put forth by the Board of Education and Administration to prepare a budget. She stated the state wide budget cuts have put an impact on public schools in New Jersey and the cuts mandated by the state are going to occur whether our budget passes or not. She stated if the community votes the budget down this is going to make a bad situation worse and deeper cuts are very possible.

Lisa Rajeski stated by voting "yes" for the budget improves the education for New Egypt. She also stated the PTEA will continue working with the Board and Administration to deliver the best possible education for our children. She stated when the township responds with its support and the budget passes and our state legislators have found solutions for the funding problems currently plaguing not only our community but the entire state we will be willing to consider Governor Christie's request with a wage freeze.

Geraldine Lee commented on the population and taxpayers in the community. She stated people are losing their jobs and homes. She stated teachers deserve a good salary and no one is disputing that and no one is disputing children need an education. But somewhere along the line everybody has to work together. She also stated high school kids have to realize there is no extra money and we are living to survive right now.

Chris Neuert commented on the eliminating of three administrative personnel and looking why the Board disagrees with Mr. O'Donnell and why we need a technology person.

Mr. Hauge stated our administrators' also touch the lives of our kids and cannot run this district without administrators'. He stated reducing does affect the kids. He stated they are faced with a terrible challenge of trying to decide what is going to hurt the kids the least and looking at the future.

Mr. Hauge stated we don't know what the district is going to look like in three months, six months or the beginning of next school year. He also stated we don't know what the schools are going to look like or how they are going to be organize. He stated the administrators' along with the Superintendent are the educational experts and we have to rely on them.

Mr. Neuert asked why we need a technology guy who supervises only one person.

Mr. Hauge stated we have operational issues that we have not had time to work out. He also stated the teachers did not say no and as a board we did not say no. He stated they might have said not at this time. He stated there are other things we have to look at as a Board and they are going to be mindful where they are going to be in the years to come.

Mrs. Soles clarified the difference between Administrators and Directors.

Mr. Neuert asked if we have a balance in the Federal Impact Aid that we received and is there any chance of using it this year.

Mr. Gripp explained we have a balance reserved in our fund 30 account for auditorium upgrades, lighting, sound and safety and security which is allocated for those funds and at this point we are not able to use for anything else. He stated if we did not do the Impact Aid Spending Plan in December 2008 we would have experienced a loss of that money for this school year. He stated we are 1 out of 17 school districts through out the state that did not lose money this year.

Mr. Gripp stated we do not have a balance to move forward.

Mr. Neuert asked how much of a balance is there.

Mr. Gripp responded there is about \$200,000 for safety and security and about \$84,000 for the auditorium.

Mitch Geier thanked the Administrators' for pitching in at this hard time and contributing out of their own pocket. He commented on West Essex Regional Schools not taking a salary increase. Mitch Geier commented on our teachers not taking an increase in salary and this is not acceptable as a taxpayer. He stated they have a right to do that and he has a right to vote down the budget.

Maureen Miller commented on courtesy bussing and how does it affect her children.

Mr. Gripp responded on courtesy bussing and stated they are not sure how this will work out.

Jeff Pierro stated they appreciate the situation of taxpayers and it is important to realize that teachers already contribute a great deal of their time and out of pocket money for the children of the Plumsted Township. He commented on the 4% raised by taxpayers and the sacrifices of 168 teachers. He also stated when the township responds with its support and the budget passes they will be willing to consider Governor Christie's request with a wage freeze.

Debbie Wills thanked the administrators' for the give back to the school district. She commented on the Director of Technology, School Accountant and Building & Grounds Supervisor and stated those three positions can get back the sports programs or full day kindergarten.

Debbie Wills commented to Dr. DeMareo that he as a leader should have put this out there to vote on. She also stated we did without these positions a few years ago and wants to know what the personal relationship is between the two gentlemen that are carrying these two titles.

Debbie Wills stated the teachers do give and many keep food and clothes in their room for the kids and they do go above and beyond and put out their own money. She also stated if they did more on their part by showing good faith by giving back some of the money for these titles that we did do without and they are not necessary to making our school function that maybe they can turn back and say ok was can do this. She commented that we would have more community members and taxpayers', people without children say I am going to vote for that budget. She stated right now you screwed us big time.

Luisa Erich-Carr thanked Mr. Gripp for giving back. She stated on the news this morning that Governor Christie said the Superintendent of Schools should not be making more than the State Education Commission and his salary is \$141,000. She commented on Dr. DeMareo's salary and auditing fees. She also stated she would volunteer 8 hours a week free of charge to work in accounting department. She stated we have a clerk doing payroll and someone needs to have a degree in accounting.

Mr. O'Donnell thanked Luisa Erich-Carr for her generous offer.

Luisa Erich-Carr stated she asked for copies and cannot afford 75 cents a copy. She also stated she left her resume and hopes to hear from someone.

Susan Potter stated she agrees with what Mr. O'Donnell has to say that we should start looking into more of the top positions. She also stated she sees what they teachers do and they give a lot.

Paul Sullivan commented on the difficult path and commended the Administrators'. He also commented on the kindergarten program and how he took a pay freeze this year.

Patti Houston commented on her children who attended the ½ day kindergarten program and are doing fine and attend California Berkeley College.

Pam Conk stated this is a bare bones budget and if budget is voted down I don't know where other cuts are going to be made. She stated this is 4 math, history and english teachers for each grade level. She also commented that if the budget is defeated and funds are not restored by the township committee what further cuts will be made.

Dr. DeMareo stated if the township committee makes additional cuts they are looking at the possibility of cuts in the area of staffing, programs, co-curricular activities and athletics.

Glenn Jacobus commented on the school nurse and also on the IDEA funds.

Clara Rose stated if we cut technology person who would take care of all of our technical problems in the district.

Judith Kane stated she has been teaching for 20 years in the district. She commented on statements being made about the teachers giving back and want people to know what they are asking of the teachers and also putting a burden on them as they are also taxpayers. She stated she will vote yes on the budget and her taxes will be going up also and she will be contributing to the 4% so she is already giving. She commented when you ask her to give her increment she calls it the gift that keeps on giving.

Judith Kane stated we are looking at other ways and the children are always a priority. She also stated there is a reason why she won't make a commitment until after the budget.

George Lee stated he really didn't want to see teachers take a pay cut and asked if Board with its influence have legislature come up with a fair way to fund the schools.

Paul Sullivan commented on the community member whose kids went to ½ day kindergarten and sent to California Berkeley. He stated just think what they could do if they went to a full day kindergarten.

Joni Wisniewski stated she works in the district and thanked the Board and Administrators for listening. She stated the teachers are willing to give back in this town and she is willing to give back in this town. She watched 30 co-workers lose their jobs and stated they are like family. She also stated she is willing to give 10% back knowing her co-workers would get their jobs back and totally understands the union's position.

Rich Brevogel stated he has been in the community for 16 years and loves it. He stated his kids went to ½ day kindergarten and doesn't have a problem with wanting a full day kindergarten with a tuition base which will become a revenue source. He stated he would make a donation above and beyond the tax increase he will have if he would be guaranteed that money would go right to the classroom and he would also make a donation to keep middle school sports. He stated it was important to his children and builds character, team work and social skills.

Rich Brevogel applauded the Administrators and Mr. Gripp and stated this is leadership. He also stated that people are stepping up and doing what they think is right.

Rich Brevogel stated his kids made it and they went to a ½ day kindergarten and they are doing really well.

XV. NEW BUSINESS

XVI. OLD BUSINESS

XVII. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS

Mr. Probasco stated we hear everyone and it is hard times. He stated we are trying to maintain what we have and not trying to pick on any one school.

Mr. Probasco thanked the Administrators, Mr. Gripp and Dr. DeMareo for giving back. He stated he personally supports the budget 100%.

Mrs. Soles thanked the Administrators for giving back. She thanked everyone for coming out tonight and last night and said we listened. She also stated she hopes we can all continue to work together and move on.

Mr. O'Donnell commented on the news release in regards West Essex School District.

Mr. O'Donnell stated he cannot understand and seems like they drew a line in the sand with the community and challenging the community to pass this budget.

Mr. O'Donnell commented the community passed the budget the past few years. He also stated the teachers should take a pay freeze. He stated that signs read "students succeed because we care" and this is true but, there is a time where words have to be followed by action.

Mr. O'Donnell stated the board would never have agreed to give the teachers a raise had they known the cut we were getting. He also stated the teachers are not willing to share the sacrifice.

Mr. O'Donnell thanked the community and board members. He also thanked Joanne Barlow and thanked her for a tremendous job. He thanked his son and wife and wished the Board good luck and stated he hopes the budget passes.

Mr. Miller thanked the Administrators and Mr. Gripp.

Mr. Miller thanked the community for coming out tonight and yesterday and expressing their opinions and it is good to have the feedback. He stated no one is going to be particularly happy with what the budget is or what was cut. He also stated Mr. Brevogel has made some good points and things are not going to improve dramatically in the next few years.

Mr. Miller asked for the community support on the budget.

Mr. Hauge explained the increase that was given to the teachers.

Mr. Hauge stated the process doesn't end until the budget is either passed or defeated and then goes to town council and back to the board. He stated this has been a painful process particularly recently in the last week as we got word on state funding and we have not control over this.

Mr. Hauge stated we need to move on and vote for this budget and all come together.

Mr. Buckalew thanked Mr. O'Donnell for his services on the board.

Mr. Buckalew thanked Mr. Gripp, Dr. DeMareo and Administrators for giving back to our schools and community.

Mr. Buckalew thanked the parents, teachers and community members for the important feedback. He stated it is very valuable in helping the Board make some very difficult decisions.

Mr. Buckalew thanked everyone for coming out tonight.

Mr. Hauge made a motion to adjourn at 9:45 PM.

Seconded by Mr. Probasco, Passed unanimously.

Frank E. Gripp III
Business Administrator/Board Secretary