

**\*\*\*\* UNOFFICIAL \*\*\*\***

**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES INDEX  
MARCH 10, 2008  
REGULAR SESSION 7:10 P.M.  
MOUNT PROSPECT SCHOOL**

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REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 10, 2008  
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**I. Salute to Flag**

**II. Roll Call**

PRESENT: Mr. Byrne, Ms. Carlsson, Mr. Carlucci, Mr. Koch, Ms. MsGowan,  
Ms. Smith, Ms. Stevens, Ms. Winter, Ms. Woolford,

ABSENT: None

**III. Regular Session – Call to Order – 7:10 p.m. – Mount Prospect School  
Gymnasium**

**IV. Statement of Public Notice**

This is a regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Bernards Township. Notice of the time and place of this meeting was provided and copies of that resolution were forwarded to the official newspapers as designated by the Board of Education and to the Township Clerk and a copy of the notice was posted on the bulletin board of the Board of Education Offices in accordance with P.L. 1975 Chapter 231A.

We very much welcome input from the public. There are two times during regular meetings that the public is invited to speak. One time is early in the meeting before the Board votes, and you may speak about any item that is listed on tonight's agenda. Towards the end of the meeting, there is another public forum to address any topic whatsoever.

When you approach the microphone, please state your name and address. We do not have a specific time limit, but we ask that you keep your comments brief. Please understand that our public forums are not structured as question and answer sessions, but rather they are offered as opportunities to share your thoughts with the Board. In instances where the Board feels that there is a misunderstanding or inaccuracy, a member of the Board or Administration will address it in the Board Response portion of the agenda.

There are times when a member of the public makes a comment or asks a question about an employee. New Jersey statute does not permit us to discuss personnel issues in public. Also as a matter of law, a Board of Education may only vote for or against the hiring of an employee upon the recommendation of the superintendent. If the superintendent does not recommend a person, that person's name is not listed on the agenda and there is no vote on that action. If it is necessary for the Board to go into executive session at the end of the meeting, we will provide an estimated length of time for the session and whether any action is anticipated to be taken upon returning to public session.

#### **V. Student Representative's Report**

Student Representative Mark Schroeder reported on the Ridge High School play, state testing, the upcoming Junior class fashion show and prom, proposed Student Government projects to include working with children who have autism and planting flowers in the inside courtyard.

#### **VI. Business Administrator's Report**

Business Administrator H. Ronald Smith reported on budget preparation and the upcoming school election.

#### **VII. Superintendent's Report**

1) Superintendent Valerie A. Goger updated the Board regarding the ongoing budget preparation. In addition to the annual newsletter sent to all township residents, a "user friendly" budget will be on the district website. Dr. Goger stated additional information is received each day impacting budget preparation. She suggested Board members compare any updates they receive with the 2007-08 budget not with previously proposed 2008-09 budget information.

Discussion followed on class size and hiring needs at the high school. A clearer picture of class size will be available after registration is complete in approximately a month. Currently the high school class size is well above the state average and if this need is not addressed it will continue to escalate. Not hiring 12 teachers at the high school for the 2008-09 school year along with the potential of an additional 12 teachers through movement over the next four years would bring the high school to 68% of classes above the state average class size. The enrollment will peak at the high school in 2013-14. It is anticipated that while William Annin will grow by 100 students there will only be a slight increase in class size over the next three to four years followed, at that time, by a decline in enrollment.

### **III. Committee Reports**

#### **Finance Committee**

Chairperson Janet Smith began the discussion by soliciting any questions Board members had. The Board discussed the bond interest income of \$2.4M and whether it should be utilized for one-time needed upgrades and repairs or appropriated to reduce the tax levy. The influence of not including all this money would be felt in the years to come. These funds are a one-time influx for the district and cannot be utilized for additional staff. Some projects being considered are solar panels, resurfacing the track and HVAC valve upgrades, which would reduce energy costs. Normally the capital projects line in the budget is between \$500,000 and \$600,000, only covering normal repairs and no large expense items. This is an opportunity for the district to upgrade a significant project. Various lines in the budget were discussed including transportation, the enrichment program, staffing, staff college, curriculum writing and health benefits. Until “adequacy” is met a 20% increase in state funding in the second and third year has been proposed by the Department of Education.

#### **Personnel Committee**

No report.

#### **Curriculum Committee**

Chairperson Leslie Stevens reported the Curriculum Committee meeting is being rescheduled for Thursday, March 13 at 1:30 p.m.

#### **Policy Committee**

Chairperson Susan McGowan stated the committee would not be meeting prior to the upcoming Board meeting.

#### **Community Relations**

Chairperson Susan Carlsson stated the minutes for the March 3 meeting had been distributed. Prior to the first home football game an open house is being planned to showcase the new additions and renovations at the high school including the auditorium and gymnasium. Ms. Carlsson reported on the School Boards Legislative meeting she attended on March 8 highlighting the anticipated new family leave law and financial impact on school districts who need to hire replacements vs. the private sector that may not need to.

#### **Facilities Committee**

Chairperson Lou Carlucci stated the committee’s meeting on Thursday, March 13 would begin at 3:00 p.m. with a tour at Ridge High School. The township has agreed to conduct inspections of the facilities on weekends.

**Liaison Reports**

No report.

**IX. Public Forum**

Comments were made regarding class size at William Annin and the assessment of the reading specialist positions.

**X. Board Forum**

No items.

**XI. Adjournment**

On motion by Mr. Byrne, seconded by Ms. Carlsson, and approved by all present, the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

H. Ronald Smith  
Interim Board Secretary