

**BRICK TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING – BOARD RETREAT & PUBLIC FORUM ON THE BUDGET
MARCH 8, 2011**

Location/Time: 6:15 PM Lake Riviera Middle School
105 Hendrickson Avenue, Brick, New Jersey

Present: Mr. Cuppari, Ms. Leone, Mr. Merola, Mr. Pifko,
Mr. Talty, Mr. Wolf and Ms. Terebush

Also present: Mr. Hrycenko, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Lorusso, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Ben Montenegro, Legal Counsel
and Mr. Edwards, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Ms. Terebush opened the meeting with a salute to the flag, moment of silence and roll call.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT NOTICE

Mr. Edwards announced: "The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon." In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Brick Township Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be posted on the Administration Office bulletin board, the official District website and Channel BTV-20, and sent to the Asbury Park Press and Municipal Clerk's Office.

BOARD RETREAT

Ms. Mary Ann Friedman of the New Jersey School Boards Association gave an overview of NJQSAC Regulations of evaluation of the Superintendent.

At 6:45 PM a motion was made by Ms. Leone, seconded by Mr. Cuppari, and with a unanimous roll call vote, the Board approved entering Recess.

At 7:10 PM a motion was made by Ms. Leone, seconded by Mr. Cuppari, and with a unanimous roll call vote, the Board approved reconvening the public meeting.

Ms. Terebush welcomed all and hoped they had had a chance to review the budget online. She explained the format for this meeting.

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PUBLIC COMMENT ON BUDGET

Ms. Scott commented about:

Concerns with budget and making decisions based on money for taxpayers, not what is best for students

Teacher layoffs lead to larger class size, laying off 13 teachers and 9 support staff – kids need teachers

The number of Special Education students placed Out-of-District , 170

We were bringing students back to the District

Mr. Hrycenko indicated that most Out-of-District placements are for high school students – Ms. Scott suggested making a program for them

Health Care Change – saving the District \$300,000?

Mr. Edwards is a good BA, but not for a District, perhaps Corporate because he doesn't understand the kids

Laying off the trainers this year and bringing in private trainers did not save money over the trainers who had been Consultants for years

Mr. Edwards responded that in accordance with State Statute he conducted an RFP for Consultants

Ms. Coll commented about:

Takes exception to the previous speaker– the senior citizens must be taken into consideration regarding taxes

Taxes also include the Township portion and Referendum

She explained “freezing” senior citizen taxes can only happen after living here 10 years

She advised going to the State about the Abbott District

She spoke about Parochial Schools, her experiences with them and class size and their affect on our budget (If they all closed for example)

She advised working the with Department of Transportation to make streets safe for students to walk to school

Doesn't want her money used to transport students to extracurricular events

She doesn't like working on a computer and expressed displeasure at not receiving a paper copy of the budget

Mr. Lawrence commented about:

His weekend printing and review of the budget, sorting it differently

He noted a net decrease of about \$2 million from teachers salaries and a net increase of about \$249,000 for the Administrators' salaries – His concern about how this benefits the kids – cutting teachers salaries and adding to the Principals salaries

Projection analysis review – decrease suggestions for nurses Custodial Grounds Librarians and Social Workers

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Decreased custodial salaries by \$2.4million but added in another account \$2.562 million for an increase of \$114,000 while decreasing teachers

He noted increases in Grounds, Librarians and Social Workers

With decreases in natural gas, how?

Decrease prescriptions by \$1.3 million, how?

Bus Drivers decrease \$466,000, how?

Raise to principals is about 9% to each principal on average

Cutting textbooks \$260,000, cutting teachers salaries yet adding money for custodians, Nurses and Principals

Goal is to pass this budget

Too much focus on line item expenses

Develop a strategy to show voters what is in it for them

Prepare a list of good things for parents and students

Provide feedback of where you have spent your money and how you have used it wisely

Talk about successes such as the Solar Panels

Make a presentation that is easy to understand, used sandwich as an example

Athletes

First provide a list of good things that improve the child's education and getting into college, meaningful positions in the budget, what expenditures save people money and what organizations you can partner with to raise funds

Second provide a list of bad things – if you don't pass the budget – explain what programs are going to suffer and how it will affect the community

Athletes – if you cut they will have nothing to do and may turn to crime and drug use

Third show the kids that we are ready to do the hard work for them

He had the following recommended changes to the budget:

1. 9% reduced to 5% raise for principals (hire 4 teachers)
2. Keep custodians flat (hire 2 teachers)
3. Reduce custodial expense from \$645,000 to \$400,000 (hire 4 teachers and 2 paras)
4. Find a partner to raise revenue
5. Get revenue with advertising on the website – sell stickers I support Brick Schools to stores for their window, etc.

He had the following recommendations to get the budget passed:

6. Strategy show the public good things that will happen if they pass this budget
7. Provide feedback against the rumor that if they support the budget it will cost them money
8. Discuss the budget so that public can understand it –what's it in for them
9. Use sandwich as model for information: tell them what is good, then what will happen if they don't pass it and then back to the good again

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BOARD COMMENT ON BUDGET

Ms. Leone comments on:

Having given the staff an incentive to use generic drugs – which has saved money

Contracts are preventing some changes

The change in bussing is that students/parents are funding transportation for class trips

State regulations regarding advertising on the website are not in place yet.

Mr. Pifko commented on:

Thanking the public for all of their ideas and that the Operations Committee will take everything into consideration

Solar Panels are profitable - would like to pursue more

Discussed SREC sales \$262,550 so far– another sale coming up, estimating about \$310,000

An article first in the Asbury Park Press and then in the Community Reporter saying the District is going above cap – where are they getting this information? – no one from Administration or the Board has given it to them – so to the Asbury Park Press: please check with us first.

Ms. Terebush

Addressed Ms. Coll's comment about contacting the legislators regarding the Abbott Districts saying that she is in agreement with Ms. Coll and advises being vocal and active in making sure the legislators know what the community wants when they go to Trenton. Our representatives are accessible – make an appointment and so see them. Your voice can make a difference.

Mr. Cuppari

Would like to piggyback on Ms. Coll's and Ms. Terebush's comments, having worked in an Abbott District for 15 years and noting that spending more money is not affecting student achievement. The problem is the unfairness of the State Formula.

Mr. Talty commented on:

Realities of the 2% cap

Increase in State Aid – a little more than they thought

Policy 3100 – and the three items it indicates should be given to the Board and hence the public(Proposed expenditures for each line item for 11-12, anticipated existing expenditures for the current school year, and actual expenditures vs projection (final analysis) for last school year), talked to Mr. Edwards who can get the figures for him so that people can make a better assessment of the budget
Need to have the 09-10 budget with final figures to make a good assessment.

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He gave two examples where more information would be helpful: Math & Literacy Coaches and legal fees.

Mr. Pifko responded to Mr. Talty:

There is confusion because you are using paperwork which we do not have and it seems to be questions on budget line items that are items that were already voted on. This does not seem to be looking forward to the 2011-2012 budget; however, if you provide me with the paperwork, we would be happy to get an answer for you and talk about these issues at the Operations Committee. He continued saying that he was finding the information on budget regarding the prior year.

Mr. Edwards responded.

In the budget detail you have the 08/09 figure, 09/10 figure, 10/11 budget and the proposed amount and the details. It does not give you the current year expenditure – the Software does not provide that option. However, there is another report which gives that information but no detail. A zero based budget– looks at which is proposed – not go back to see what you spent in the past.

Mr. Pifko noted that page 5 is on the screen and everyone can see the details. Discussion continued with Ms. Leone, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Hrycenko and Mr. Talty regarding the format of the information provided. What is there and what is not. Mr. Edwards stressed that the 201-2012 budget needs to be examined – perhaps using the sandwich approach of Mr. Lawrence: for what is good, what is bad and then the good again, and not focus on what has happened in the past. Adding even more detail to the reports will confuse the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON BUDGET

Mr. Acosta commented:

on sports cuts. Sports are important for kids for their whole life. Why can't we just give them the same opportunities you had as kids? What positive can come from cutting sports?

Ms. Coll commented :

Taking personal exception to comments from Mr. Pifko to Mr. Talty

Regarding Mr. Edwards, she feels that he should provide Mr. Talty with anything wants

She will put in an OPRA Request for the entire budget, but does not want bar graphs or ½ pages – cut it down

Going individually to the legislators not helpful – mobilizing everyone more effective

No employee of the Brick Schools should receive 1 cent in a raise this year

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Ms. Dey asked or commented on:

Are we replacing Middle School Sports for High School Sports?

Mr. Hrycenko responded that the high school sports that are in now will be in next year.

Perfect attendance (Mr. Edwards explained the savings)

Homeless Grant (Mr. Hrycenko explained the procedure)

Mr. Estrada thanked the Board for what they do for the students.

He echoes the concerns of other of the need to keep sports in the budget

We Should fight for the programs

He gave Ms. Terebush and Mr. Pifko letters regarding a 501(c) Play to Pay corporation through which donations from the parents and more from outside Corporations can be used to save the program

Kids without these programs can get into trouble.

He is looking forward to working to partnering with the Board and Administration to save the programs, create jobs and put Brick Town on the map. They have created a business plan to teach everybody how to keep the programs running from a to z.

Mr. Kight thanked Mr. Pifko for clearing up a rumor.

Is it a rumor that Middle School Sports will be put on as a Second Question? (Mr. Pifko replied that there is not the intention – they should be put in the budget now)

Will high school sports be reduced to provide middle school sports?

The rumor process is good to create dialogue

It is a matter of educating the public – like the sandwich example of Mr. Lawrence. People have to vote for the budget. He gave an example of why information from 2009 is helpful. Discussion continued regarding Perfect Attendance, and changes in the Chart of Accounts.

The discussion continued between Mr. Edwards and Mr. Kight about putting together and showing how much was proposed and what was actually spent – He advised taking time to explain it to the public. The Board should work with the Town Council to help pass the budget.

Ms. Terebush

told Mr. Kight that she had advised the public to make appointments and did not stay “storm the doors” of the legislators. Mr. Kight agreed that that was his phrase. Ms. Terebush acknowledged a harshness between the Council and the Board of Ed but indicated that Mr. DeLuca never reached out to her. However, Mr. Sangiovanni and she had been having and will continue to have conversation regarding the Budget. Mr. Kight indicated that we will have a second question from the Township and more for the School District. The public wants to know where you have spent the money we have already given you. Ms. Terebush thanked him for his comments.

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Mr. Pifko

Pointed out that Mr. Kight had good suggestions and for the last two years, based upon requests from the public, the Committee recommended that the full detail of the budget be placed on the website. For the first time this detail is available prior to the night it is being approved. Also this year a series of meetings Tuesday nights has been made available to take down ideas. Mr. Talty's request for more information will be considered by the Operations Committee Thursday. However, Mr. Lawrence's comment that too much detail isn't good either is true. Someone can then find one line item in the budget they don't like and vote no on the whole budget.

Ms. Zuckerman

Suggested putting out the message, if you care about education, educate yourself on the budget
Are increased fuel costs included? (Mr. Edwards indicated that they will be addressed at the Operations Committee and could change, due to recent increases in gas costs)
Should bus athletes but
Should charge spectators who ride the bus
Should offer Full Year World Language in 8th grade
Sell the budget by stressing the link between education and home values

Ms. Cusanelli

Asked questions regarding the Perfect Attendance Policy and Sick Day Reimbursement. Mr. Edwards told her that they are two different accounts. Sick Day payouts are contractual and occur at retirement. He continued telling her where to get the information she is looking for. She recommended that any savings be used to put middle school sports and Latin programs in the high schools back in the budget.

Ms. Beyer asked or commented on:

Is there no money in the budget for Middle School Sports?
Asked if there is anything you are doing to bring back Middle School Sports?
The High School stays the same? (yes as this current year)
Spoke about all of the positives when students are involved with sports.
Suggested focus on the Mission Statement and raise the bar.
Mr. Hrycenko explained that we do live by the mission and cited specifics where the District had raised the bar
Suggested trying to raise the morale so that all employees project they want the best for the students

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Ms. Terebush

Middle School Sports are a hot topic
Can the public suggest what we can take out to put them in

Ms. Beyer and Mr. Hrycenko discuss revenue in the budget.

Mr. Hrycenko

Explained that these are hard choices, giving examples of what has been cut this year, and have to give credit to the Board for making them

Mr. Filippone commented on:

Thanked Mr. Lawrence for his hard work and suggestions
Clarified that the line item regarding raises for principals, included assistant principals as well and the net raise was 1.7%

Mr. Edwards said that confusion may be coming from the fact that in the 10/11 line staff were not showing because they were paid out of the Ed Job bill and they are now included in the 11/12 line.

Ms. Richardson asked or commented on: (Mr. Hrycenko, Mr. Edwards and Ms. Lorusso answered)

Said people do ask what's in it for me?
So she would like a list of what was lost last year and what was added and the good things in this budget
Class Trips
Kindergarten enrollment meaning less classes
DARE for the 5th Grade
Advil/Tylenol for Nurse

Mr. Fanelli commented on or suggested:

Why did you vote on budget before checking details?
Should be in financial disaster mode – no money in budget, no money out here either
In the future negotiate a 2 yr pay freeze for all
Remove Perfect Attendance
Charge something for High School Sports
Consolidate elementary schools
No subs for custodial, clerical – only teachers and bus drivers
Look at the Nurses program – too high
Library budget is too high
Pay raises for Administration (Note: AD went from 1 school to 2 schools)
Do away with monitors

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Do away with Drug Testing
Do away with Tuition Reimbursement
Do away with Replacing School busses every year – go to every other year
Reduce supplies – disparity between schools
Reduce Building Maintenance supplies – they are raising rapidly
Do Shared Services
Reduce Legal Fees - \$160,000 for litigation alone?
Make a 40 hour work week for all and then eligible for overtime
Are we putting a Referendum on the ballot?

A motion was made by Ms. Leone, seconded by Mr. Pifko, and with the following roll call vote the Board of Education approved the Polling hours for the Annual School Election, as follows:

Mr. Wolf	Yes
Mr. Talty	Yes
Ms. Leone	Yes
Mr. Merola	Yes
Mr. Cuppari	Yes
Mr. Pifko	Yes
Ms. Terebush	Yes

To approve the hours for the Annual School Election, Wednesday, April 27, 2011, as 2:30 PM to 9:00 PM

At 10:00 PM a motion was made by Ms. Leone, seconded by Mr. Merola, and with a unanimous roll call vote, the Board of Education approved entering Executive Session for the purpose of Litigation matters.

At 10:25 PM a motion was made by Mr. Leone, Seconded by Mr. Merola, and with a unanimous roll call vote, the Board of Education approved returning to Regular Session.

A motion was made by Ms. Leone, seconded by Mr. Cuppari, to approve a motion authorizing the Board Attorney to defend the S.E.C. Complaint, Docket C08-11, and with the following roll call vote, the motion was approved:

Mr. Wolf	Yes
Mr. Talty	Yes
Ms. Leone	Yes
Mr. Merola	Yes
Mr. Cuppari	Yes
Mr. Pifko	Yes
Ms. Terebush	Yes

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, at 10:26 PM a motion was made by Ms. Leone, seconded by Mr. Cuppari, and with a unanimous roll call vote, the Board of Education **adjourned** this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

James W. Edwards, Jr. CPA
Business Administrator/
Board Secretary