

SOUTH PLAINFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

125 Jackson Avenue
South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080-3509
Telephone: 908.754.4620
Website: spboe.org

**Organization Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, January 3, 2018 – 6:30 p.m.
South Plainfield High School
200 Lake Street
South Plainfield, NJ 07080**

- I. CALL TO ORDER – Mr. Damato called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
- II. FLAG SALUTE

ANNOUNCEMENT

South Plainfield Public Schools Mission Statement:

Students are the focus of the South Plainfield Public Schools. We will provide a dynamic, rigorous, relevant and technology-enriched curriculum, guided by the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Our mission is to develop life-long learners who are prepared to succeed in a global and diverse society. We are resolved to educate the whole child, instilling the desire within our students to question and to become divergent thinkers who can achieve their fullest potential.

In accordance with the terms of the Sunshine Law, adequate notice of this meeting was posted in all school buildings, the Administration Building and sent to the Borough Clerk's office, Police Headquarters, Public Library, four newspapers and W.C.T.C. on December 1, 2017.

Please be advised:

- There is no smoking on school grounds - inside or outside - at any time.
- Please silence all electronic devices.
- Pursuant to District Policy #0167, each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three minutes' duration and no participant may speak more than once on the same topic.

III. TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS FOR WHICH MEETING WAS CALLED:

A. Announcement of Newly Elected Board Members

Mr. Damato announced the names of the newly elected Board Members:

Keith Both
Pio Pennisi
Stephanie Wolak

B. Oath of Office

Oath of Office was administered by the Board Attorney, Joseph Roselle for the successful candidates elected to the Board of Education at the November 7, 2017 annual School Election:

Keith Both, Pio Pennisi and Stephanie Wolak for three year terms

C. Roll Call- James Damato
Interim Board Secretary/Business Administrator

Present: Mrs. Anesh, Mr. Both, Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Cassio, Mr. Chapman, Mr. Giannakis, Mr. Pennisi, Mr. Seesselberg, Mrs. Wolak

Also Present: Dr. Noreen Lishak, Superintendent; Ms. Mary Malyska, Assistant Superintendent; Mr. James Damato, Interim Business Administrator; Mr. Stephen Fried, Assistant Business Administrator; Mr. Joseph Roselle, Legal Counsel

D. Election of President

Mr. Damato announced that nominations are in order for the office of President.

Mr. Giannakis nominated Mr. Seesselberg for President. Mr. Damato asked if there are any other nominations for the Office of President. There were no other nominations or discussion.

Mr. Seesselberg was elected with a vote of 8-0-1.
Mrs. Boyle abstained due to conflicts.

E. Election of Vice President

Mr. Seesselberg took the chair and announced that nominations are now open for the position of Vice President. Mr. Cassio nominated Mr. Chapman.

Mr. Seesselberg asked if there were any other nominations. There were no other nominations or discussion.

Mr. Chapman was elected Vice President with a vote of 8-0-1.
Mrs. Boyle abstained due to conflicts.

IV. AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

A. Agenda Additions and/or Deletions

Mr. Seesselberg announced that there is one item to add to tonight's agenda.
The resolution reads:

Representation to the Representative Assembly of the Educational Services
Commission of New Jersey

Pursuant to enacted legislation, P.L. 192-1989, Chapter 254, the South Plainfield Board of Education elected Dr. Noreen Lishak to the Representative Assembly of the Educational Services Commission of New Jersey at their meeting held on January 3, 2018 for the period of January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018

Mr. Seesselberg asked for a Motion to add.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 9-0

Mr. Seesselberg asked for a Motion. The vote is as follows:

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 9-0

B. Public Comments

V. MEETING DATES

A. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AND REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING DATES

RESOLVED, that the schedule below showing dates, times and places for Committee of the Whole agenda fixing sessions and the regular public meetings be approved, and to post said list in each of the school buildings and be sent to the Borough Clerk's Office, Police Headquarters and to fax said list to The Star Ledger, The Home News and Tribune, The Courier News, The Observer and W.C.T.C.

Committee of the Whole Meetings	Regular Public Meetings 6:30 p.m. unless noted
Wednesday, January 10, 2018	Wednesday, January 24, 2018

Organization Meeting
January 3, 2018

Wednesday, February 14, 2018	Wednesday, February 21, 2018
Wednesday, March 14, 2018	Wednesday, March 21, 2018
Wednesday, April 18, 2018	Wednesday, April 25, 2018 *
Wednesday, May 9, 2018	Wednesday, May 16, 2018
Wednesday, June 13, 2018 -	Wednesday, June 20, 2018
Wednesday, July 18, 2018 – 6:00 p.m.	Wednesday, July 18, 2018 – 8:00 p.m.
Wednesday, August 22, 2018 – 6:00 p.m.	Wednesday, August 22, 2018 – 8:00 p.m.
Wednesday, September 12, 2018	Wednesday, September 19, 2018
Wednesday, October 10, 2018	Wednesday, October 17, 2018
Wednesday, November 7, 2018	Wednesday, November 14, 2018
Wednesday, December 12, 2018	Wednesday, December 19, 2018

*Public Budget Hearing

All meetings will be held in the South Plainfield High School Information Center, 200 Lake Street, South Plainfield, NJ 07080.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Seesselberg requested the following modifications. He suggested moving the January Committee of the Whole Meeting to the 17th and the Regular Public Meeting to the 24th. He said since January has five Wednesdays in it, moving the meetings will give time for the committees to reorganize and possible have a meeting. Mr. Seesselberg said that if that goes forward, the February meetings would need to be moved to the 14th and the 21st. There was also a suggestion that the November meeting be moved because it would be the night before Teacher Convention so we would move that to the week before or the Monday or Tuesday of that week.

Mr. Seesselberg said that because of all of the interviews and awards and recognitions during the June meeting last year, he suggested that the Committee of the Whole in June be on the 13th and the Regular meeting stay on the 20th. He said that he already checked with administration and there is only one event on the 20th which is the Wrestling Alumni Dinner. There are no conflicts with any of the other schools if we were to add the 13th for the COW. Mr. Seesselberg said that we would also change the time of that back to 6:30 p.m.

Mrs. Anesh said that she would suggest holding off the September – December meeting dates until the school calendar comes out. Mr. Roselle said that the meetings have to be posted for the year. They can always be changed after the calendar come out but the dates for the year need to be posted in the papers.

Mr. Seesselberg asked if there was any other discussion. He then said that they will go through the suggested changes one at a time.

Organization Meeting
January 3, 2018

He asked if everyone is in agreement to move the January Committee of the Whole to the 17th and the Regular meeting to the 24th.

Mr. Damato said that the only issue with that is that they were planning to award the bid for Middle School HVAC on the 10th because of the tight timeframe on ordering materials. He said that it's going to be extremely tight to get everything in by the summer anyway.

Mr. Seesselberg said he thought the bid opening was scheduled for the 23rd. Mr. Damato said that the bid opening was scheduled for tomorrow and that he postponed it until Friday because of the storm. We will have the numbers in but that would give us an extra week of time to fit into our schedule.

Mrs. Boyle asked if you can do that at a special meeting. Mr. Damato said that having it on the 17th is not the end of the world, but, again, we are really being pressured by the architect to try to get these things done as quickly as possible because, in the case of HVAC, a lot of big ticket items need to be ordered far in advance.

Mrs. Boyle said that she meant for the 10th, not the 17th. She asked if we can do a special meeting just for that. Mr. Damato said that we could.

Mr. Giannakis suggested leaving January 10th the way it is and move the January 17th meeting to January 24th and bump it back to 6:00 p.m. for the committee reports. It's not going to take that much extra time. This way you still have everything intact for the bid process. You are moving the meeting to the 24th which is what you wanted to do anyway but bump it to 6:00 p.m. instead of 6:30 and we can do the committee reports at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Seesselberg said that, at this point, the January 10th meeting, due to the bid, will be kept as the COW and award the bid that night or we can have it as a special meeting just for the bid.

Mr. Chapman suggested keeping the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Seesselberg said that we will keep the Committee of the Whole on the 10th. We can move the second meeting to the 24th. That will give us two weeks. Hopefully, by then the committees will have some type of meeting and something to report on the 24th.

Mrs. Anesh asked why 6:00 p.m. Mr. Seesselberg said that we can keep that at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Seesselberg said that we are keeping the Committee of the Whole on the 10th and will move the Regular Public Meeting to January 24th at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Seesselberg said that the February meeting will only be two weeks between the January and February meetings. He asked if we can move that to the 14th and the 21st. He said that will make it the second and third Wednesdays in February which is what we usually have anyway. Mr. Seesselberg asked if we are okay with the 14th and the 21st and March will be the 14th and the 21st.

In June, we will add June 13th as the COW at 6:30 and then 6:30 on the 20th for the Regular Meeting.

Dr. Lishak asked what we are doing for January. Mr. Seesselberg said the 10th and the 24th. Dr. Lishak asked why we are doing anything in February and asked why we aren't leaving it the way that it has always been.

Mr. Seesselberg said that the way it has been, it has been the 2nd and 3rd Wednesday. Dr. Lishak asked isn't that what it is. Mr. Seesselberg said that it is the first and second Wednesdays. Dr. Lishak said okay, move it to the second and third Wednesday s. Mr. Seesselberg said that is what we will do, the 14th and the 21st in both February and March.

Mr. Seesselberg said that the June Committee of the whole will be held on the 13th at 6:30 p.m. and the Regular Public Meeting will be on the 20th at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Seesselberg said for November, we can either keep everything as it is now and then modify once the school calendar is out. July and August meetings we will have two in one night and then the September through December meetings can be adjusted once the school calendar is out.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 9-0

VI. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

RESOLVED, that the Board shall be governed in its deliberations in all cases in which it is not inconsistent with Statute, Administrative Code, Bylaws of the Board or Robert's Rules of Order (as revised), except that rules or order may be amended at any meeting by a majority of the full board.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 9-0

VII. ADOPT BOARD MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education adopt the New Jersey School Boards Association Board Member Code of Ethics as shown in Tab VII.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 9-0

VIII. PUBLIC ADDRESS

A. Public Comments

Vivian Springfield, 120 Nunnick Lane, introduced herself as a mom of two

children in the school district. One child is in elementary school and the other is in Grant School. Both, unfortunately, have life-threatening food allergies to one allergen to which she said she does not have to give a detail about. This past September an incident occurred regarding her son's allergy which could have ended horribly but did not. Mrs. Springfield said that she will shed light on this incident in an e-mail to board members directly to keep some privacy. She said that she is more concerned with how to move forward in a productive way of improving food allergy management and a bunch of other things regarding food allergy because she said that she believes it is her right to have her children feel safe when they are left in the district's care. She said that she believes that all of the board members would agree with her.

Mrs. Springfield said that she will also send an e-mail regarding that broader subject and also shed some light on that particular incident. She said that she has been in some discussions with Dr. Lishak and Mr. Damato. She said that she believes further discussions are necessary but also other information regarding the broader aspect.

Mrs. Springfield said that since the incident, she decided to start a food allergy support group within the South Plainfield Community. She said that she wishes to strictly allow parents of, initially, life-threatening food allergies to help her decide how they are going to play a role in the community to better enforce food allergy awareness policies and guidelines. She said that we definitely need a separate policy. Mrs. Springfield said that she has spent at least two months educating herself because there is always more to educate, even as a parent of two and they both have life-threatening allergies to the same allergen so she needs to be very careful.

Mrs. Springfield said that she does have a few flyers that she will give out at the end of the meeting. She said that she would like to give one to each board member and told them to feel free to share with anyone that you know that has life-threatening food allergies. She said that she will also accept e-mails from regular parents of children with food allergies but, because if we set up for life-threatening, it helps everyone else and depending upon how many other parents she get to support because she can't do this by herself as it is very stressful. She said that she would also like to hear other people's stories and she does not want to limit it to one school. She said that she would like it to cross the whole school district. Mrs. Springfield said thank you and she will see you at the next board meeting.

Mr. Seesselberg said that an efficient way to distribute, rather than sending it to each board member directly, is to send it to either Mr. Damato or Dr. Lishak and they will forward it to all of the board members in their Friday packet. You do not have to e-mail all of the board members individually.

B. Board Member Comments

Mr. Chapman welcomed Mr. Both, Mr. Pennisi and Mrs. Wolak. He said that he is looking forward to having a great year and said that they are wonderful additions to the Board and thinks they are going to be very valuable members.

Mr. Giannakis said congratulations to Mr. Seesselberg and Mr. Chapman for their appointments and welcome Mrs. Wolak, Mr. Both and Mr. Pennisi. He said that he agrees with what Mr. Chapman said. He looks forward to working with them to keep the district moving forward.

Mrs. Boyle wished everyone a happy and healthy new year and welcomed the new board members. She announced that January 23rd is the 4th and 5th grade spelling bee. There are still a few spaces available for any student that lives in South Plainfield whether they are home schooled, go to a private school or go to this school district. Mrs. Boyle announced that the Annual Mayor's Wellness Blood Drive along with the High School Student Council is February 6th here in the auditorium.

Mr. Seesselberg welcomed the three new board members. He said that we received good wishes from Massachusetts today. Mrs. Byrne sent an e-mail wishing us good luck this year.

Mr. Seesselberg said that in regards to the committee assignments, all the board members will receive an electronic form from him tomorrow morning asking for their preferences for the committees. He said that if he gets that back by Sunday, all of the committee assignments will be released by Noon on Monday. Also, as a reminder, the primary distribution of the packet will be electronically. That will start this Friday. If you have any questions or issues with it, please contact either Dr. Lishak or someone else who can help. Mr. Seesselberg said that if we can't get the tablet by Friday, we will have to modify it but he thinks that Mr. Estrada might have a few.

Dr. Lishak said that there was a question about whether the board members wanted chrome books or tablets. Mr. Seesselberg said to please let Dr. Lishak know if you want a chrome book or a tablet and we will make one available as soon as possible.

Mrs. Boyle said that having the electronic packet was contingent upon having a tablet or a chrome book. Mrs. Boyle said if we are not going to have those by Friday then go back to having the printed out packet for the two board members. Mr. Seesselberg said that they will adapt but it is not going to be indefinite. He said to let Dr. Lishak or Mr. Estrada know your preference and they will get it to you expeditiously.

Mrs. Wolak said that she is happy to be here and she looks forward to working with everyone. She wished everyone a happy new year. She also said that if you saw her on her phone, she wasn't really on her phone. She was writing notes because she forgot her pen.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

RESOLVED, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1, *et. seq.*) that the Board meets in closed session to discuss confidential matters pertaining to personnel and legal matters.

1. a matter rendered confidential by federal or state law
2. a matter in which release of information would impair the right to receive government funds
3. material the disclosure of which constitutes an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy
4. a collective bargaining agreement and/or negotiations related to it
5. a matter involving the purchase, lease, or acquisition of real property with public fund
6. protection of public safety and property and/or investigations of possible violations or violations of law
7. pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation and/or matters of attorney-client privilege
8. specific prospective or current employees unless all who could be adversely affected request an open session
9. deliberation after a public hearing that could result in a civil penalty or other loss

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the matters discussed in closed session shall be made public as soon as the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 9-0

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business of the Board, there was a motion to adjourn at 8:42 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 9-0

Respectfully submitted,

James Damato
Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary