

SOUTH PLAINFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
125 Jackson Avenue  
South Plainfield, NJ 07080  
Telephone: 908-754-4620

**Special Business Meeting – Wednesday, September 26, 2018 – 9:00 a.m.**  
**Roosevelt Administration Building**  
**125 Jackson Avenue**  
**South Plainfield, NJ 07080**

- I. CALL TO ORDER – Mr. Seesselberg called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
- II. SALUTE TO FLAG
- III. ROLL CALL – Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Both, Mr. Cassio, Mrs. Wolak, Mr. Chapman,  
Mr. Seesselberg

Absent: Mrs. Anesh, Mr. Giannakis, Mr. Pennisi

Also Present: Dr. Noreen Lishak, Superintendent; Ms. Mary Malyska, Assistant  
Superintendent; Mr. Stephen Fried, Assistant Business  
Administrator/Board Secretary; Mr. Joseph Roselle, Legal Counsel

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, Borough Clerk's office, Police Headquarters, Public Library, four newspapers and W.C.T.C. on September 21, 2018.

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

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limited to three minutes' duration and no participant may speak more than once on the same topic.

IV. 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:

SECOND:

VOTE:

V. COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

- A. Agenda Additions and/or Deletions
- B. Public Comments (Agenda Items Only)

VI. TRANSACTION FOR WHICH MEETING WAS CALLED

- A. Approval of Professional Services Contract

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RESOLVED that the Board of Education approve the use of Ross Haber Associates, LLC, Demographer, to address residential expansion in South Plainfield, in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Seesselberg said that the Board received two proposals from Mr. Damato yesterday. They are Ross Haber Associates and Whitehall Associates. Mr. Seesselberg said that Mr. Damato is here to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. Cassio asked Mr. Damato for his recommendation.

Mr. Damato said that he thinks that Ross Haber Associates is the better choice because of the way they are analyzing. He said that their base price is higher but it includes more.

Mrs. Boyle said that there are a lot of things that are not included in the Whitehall proposal but can be added on as an additional cost. There is no way of knowing what the travel costs will add up to. She said that Ross Haber Associates is all-inclusive.

Mr. Damato said that they are both very capable firms. He said that Whitehall has a limited capacity to go out and do physical studies. He said that Whitehall does the survival cohort which is only kids coming into the system versus families moving out. Mr. Damato said that Ross Haber Associates' proposal is more comprehensive.

Mr. Seesselberg added that Ross Haber Associates has done a lot in this area. Mr. Damato said that they are located right in East Brunswick. He said that both firms are very capable, he's worked with both firms and as far as capabilities go, they are equal.

Mrs. Wolak asked if the Board can get a copy of a current report that they did for a local school so that they can see what it entails. Mr. Damato said that he doesn't see why not. He said if that is what you want we can ask them for it.

Mr. Damato asked Mr. Roselle if we should do a straw poll. Mr. Roselle said yes because it is a board decision.

Mr. Chapman asked if we have to contract with the demographer now about the capacity and redistricting reports. Mr. Damato said that we do not. They are completely independent of what we are doing here.

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Mr. Chapman said that he agrees that once we add the extras to Whitehall it may exceed Haber's pricing.

Mr. Cassio said he likes that fact that Haber will come to a public meeting.

Mr. Damato said that when you do redistricting the fee will probably be a similar type of fee. He said that if you want them to do the redistricting they have to plug everything into a computer program, they have to go out and see where everybody is coming from, plot those on the map and redraw the line so that you have the right amount of students going into each school and that you are also minimizing bus transportation. Mr. Damato said that it is a complicated process.

Mr. Chapman asked if all of these firms will work with the Homeowners Associations of existing developments to try to get some information from them about current population of children that are at a certain age.

Mr. Damato said that a lot of it is going to be based off the rolls. He said he doesn't know if they are actually going to go out and knock on doors but he said he can speak to them about that.

Mr. Chapman said that he can't say for sure but his concern is that he has heard that Celebrations has a lot of non-school age children running around. Mr. Damato said that is an interesting fact and he will bring that to their attention.

Dr. Lishak asked what the estimated time is to receive the information because depending on those numbers we may have to quickly go into the redistrict process. Mrs. Boyle said she thinks that Haber put out a timeline.

Dr. Lishak said that we can decide after we receive this information if we want to use this company to do a redistrict. She asked how long a redistrict will take.

Mr. Damato said that it will take significantly longer and we may also only have to do a small redistrict. If you had capacity at one school and can move the line a couple of streets over which may be a way to use your existing buildings to accomplish a goal. That would be a short-term solution. Mr. Damato said that if you have a development with 200 three bedroom units you can probably guess that there will be one kid out of each one.

Mr. Seesselberg said that Haber's proposal says that it will take three weeks from the time they receive all of the necessary data from the district and planning board.

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Mr. Damato said that most of the information is coming from us. He said that they are going to ask for enrollment data by schools and they are going to see if they can get the transportation maps so that they have it for informational purposes to provide a better idea of cost. Mr. Damato said that he has what was approved for this complex but we don't know what might get approved next year. He said that we do know that there are other affordable housing overlay zones in South Plainfield, one of which is Harris Steele which is a massive piece of property. He said that he doesn't know how many units that can accommodate but she is sure that it's twice the size of Motorola.

Mr. Cassio asked the when the earliest redistrict would be considered. Dr. Lishak said that she thinks that we should have the information but thinks we wouldn't need to do it next year because the units wouldn't be built yet. She said it would be a projection of 2021.

Mr. Cassio asked if they had Potter in here to consider housing students. Dr. Lishak said that they did discuss that. She said that he was going to come up with some numbers but the amount of work that this building would take he had said that it would be just about the cost of an addition to one of the other buildings. He projected 7.5-8 Million and that was without taking into account what this building would be used for. That was a projection number and could be higher.

Mr. Chapman said that it would be smart of us to go to our legislature because the unintended consequences of all of this development was probably not thought through. He said that our taxpayers are going to bear a high burden here in the not too distant future. Mr. Chapman said that with all of these changes and another round that is supposed to be done by 2025 he believes that the unintended consequences from all of this development is astronomical and he thinks that we should team together with some other communities to on our legislatures.

Mrs. Boyle said that this was a major concern in Trenton. There are roughly 500 school districts represented and that was the concern with just about all of them.

Dr. Lishak said that we are talking about the costs for just facilities. There is also a recurring cost that will go on every year for the students that move in. We have to be able to have teachers to teach them. We have to have aides for those with special education needs. The cost of this once facilities is addressed will be ongoing year after year and that will be in the Millions as well.

Mr. Chapman discussed the two percent cap on the budget. He said that all of a sudden if

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you get an influx of 50 or 60 students in one year the impact on the budget is going to greatly exceed the two percent cap that we are allowed to go to.

Mr. Seesselberg said that it won't be a gradual rise, it will be one big step.

Mr. Both asked for an explanation on how taxes would be collected from places like Celebrations and the Motorola site. He asked if the process is the same as a homeowner. Mr. Roselle said that it is the property owner who pays the taxes the same way that we do. He said that if someone buys a townhouse they will portion out their share of the taxes and the owner will pay whatever is left.

Mr. Seesselberg said that one wildcard would be if he is getting any type of tax break and there may also be deferred taxes. Mr. Roselle said that he is sure that they are going to get a tax break for this.

Mrs. Boyle said that she has a meeting with Congressman Pallone in two weeks. COAH and funding will be discussed

Mrs. Wolak said that unfortunately she knows that the town is required to allow building for people who do have enough money to buy a house but asked why we have to have so many units. She said that there are only a few units that are actually designated for people who don't have funds so why are we allowing them to build such a big building.

Mr. Chapman said that we have no say on that. We have to react to what is done and these are the hands that are dealt to us. We have no choice.

Mr. Seesselberg said that it is now all low or moderate. Some of these Celebrations units are going for \$249,000.

Mr. Damato said that this new project is 82 affordable housing units.

Mr. Seesselberg conducted a straw poll to add Ross Haber Associates to the agenda for approval. The straw poll results were 6-0 in favor of Ross Haber Associates.

MOTION: Mr. Chapman

SECOND: Mr. Cassio

VOTE: 6-0

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

VIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

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IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business of the Board, there was a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Mr. Chapman SECOND: Mr. Cassio VOTE: 6-0

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Fried  
Assistant Business Administrator/Board Secretary