

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORKSESSION MINUTES – May 8, 2018

NOTICE OF MEETING:

The worksession meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, May 8, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to the notice sent to each member. Action was taken.

Mrs. Minneci called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mr. David Arminio, Dr. Guy Francis, Mrs. Sherry Higgins, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. Jeffrey Monge, Mrs. Nellis Regis-Darby, Mrs. Linda Richardson, Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mr. Vito Nufrio (arrived at 8:10 p.m.)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Mr. Gregory Tatum, Mr. Gerry Benaquista, Mrs. Moses, Mr. Gregory Brennan, Mrs. Kim Conti, Mrs. Ann Hart, Mrs. Sandra Paul, Mr. Barry Loessel

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Paul Griggs, Esq.

Mrs. Williams led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Brennan read the statement required under the “Open Public Meetings Act”, a copy of which is on file in the office of the Board Secretary.

Mrs. Regis-Darby read the District’s mission statement.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON RESOLUTIONS IN BOLD ONLY:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes will be approved at the regular Board meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Communications are also part of personnel.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

Mr. Tatum stated good evening and I would like to begin tonight with a statement regarding our current budget situation and then move on to what will be presented next week.

At the budget hearing on April 26, 2018, it was stated that the district would be forced to initiate layoffs due to a budget gap of approximately \$7.5 million. At this time it was announced the total of 149 teaching positions would be eliminated to balance the 2018-2019 school budget. I announced my opposition to that number of teachers to be eliminated. After analysis of the budget it became more practical to implement across-the-board cuts to reach the desired goal. I want it to be perfectly clear that only eliminating 49 teaching positions would not facilitate the amount needed to balance the budget.

Therefore, as a matter of practice, by May 15, 2018, all non-tenured faculty and staff will be issued a letter of nonrenewal. As the district works to finalize the necessary budget cuts a revised line item budget will be submitted to the County Superintendent's Office for approval.

Next week the following recognitions will be presented: Recognition – ROTC; Recognition – Syndee Alava – 11th grader ; Recognition – Joan Alexiades/Bus Driver and Gail Calderone/Supervisor of Transportation – who helped to save a life of a parent who was in an epileptic seizure and their coordinated efforts and also the child who went into the home and saw the mom in a seizure and went back out to the bus driver and between the bus driver and dispatch contacted 911 and got the parent safely to the hospital and the last I heard the parent is doing fine so we want to recognize our staff and their undertaking; Project Unify – Student Recognition – Mrs. Conti will be heading that one and other district highlights.

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Regis-Darby gave an update on the Education Committee meeting – we spoke about the elementary reading and writing curriculum for the 2018-2019 school year. Two programs were highlighted for the elementary school for reading and writing – journeys and wonders. My suggestion is that every Board member should take a look at both programs. There are demo codes that can be given to the Board members. I recommend that you take a look and if you need any extra feedback I can give you feedback on those programs because my district actually used both of them.

The English department – ready gen - grade 5 – again there is a demo code and my suggestion is that you should look at the program. It is also available online – if you go to “engage New York” it is there already – for all four modules. Each module has two components so you can take a look at that. My suggestion is and my recommendation to the rest of the Board is to go online and take a look at those programs.

The English department – grades 6-12 – they have a new initiative for the summer for reading and they are introducing some new novels. They picked some really good ones for the kids. I think the students will be really excited.

The math department also presented their new textbook for Algebra I – high school – the textbook that the students are currently using is over 10 years old so most of the textbook does not address the Common Core State Standards so that is something as a Board that you should take a look as you vote on these new curricula – most are outdated and students are using very old textbooks.

The social studies departments – some of the current issues are not recorded in those textbooks and I suggest again that you guys demo code and they are available for these curricula and most are online and take a look at it before next week and if you have any questions, most of these curricula, my district has them so if you want to ask any questions and Annie and anyone on that committee can answer those questions for you.

The math department did pilot with a school in Newark and they want to create a partnership with us because they have been using the program for a while and we looked at their 2017 PARCC score reports and we saw how the students actually moved with the implementation of this particular program. Again take a look at it online.

Mrs. Regis-Darby presented the Education/Student Discipline Committee agenda.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated E-7 – professional development plan – I'm happy to report that I looked at that long 44-page development plan and I'm happy to see that we are addressing SDL, technology and a lot of what the State is requiring that our teachers get their PDs in. I'm happy we are addressing for the 2018-2019 school year.

E-11 – proud of E-11 – for the past 13 years I have been talking about it and proud that it finally made it to the agenda and we want to pilot for the 2018-2019 full-day pre-k program. I'm urging all Board members to say yes to this. It is needed and the community needs something like this. When we start early we know what happens – we know the results, we know the foundation is really strong.

E-12 – we are changing the old computer class to the computer literacy application and program which again we are just going along with the State's standards. This is a good thing for our students.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Arminio stated for the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendents – to commend the supervisors that made the presentations today they were outstanding in their presentations and well organized.

Mrs. Minneci asked Mrs. Moses to send codes to the Board members so we can review them.

Mr. Tatum stated a question was raised at the last meeting about the employees' children in the District. I took a look and that number right now is 12 as of this date. I want to go back to E-2 – we will be revising this calendar again – I will be having a meeting with the teacher's association tomorrow to talk about this and other items. Hopefully we will actually approve the calendar next week.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I was looking at the calendar and I noticed the spring break is April 15-19 – I was curious as to why it wasn't April 19-26 to incorporate the Passover? Mr. Benaquista stated PARCC was starting the following week so we are only missing one day start time. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated take into consideration that Passover also begins that following

week. Mr. Tatum stated we have had it in both places and we have been revising it and testing takes precedents. It really doesn't make a difference to us because we are here anyway and the District is open. Mr. Benaquista stated the principals did give us feedback this year about losing a week and they did say it was harder. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I understand that I just wanted to bring it up. Thank you for including Eid al-Fitr on the calendar and it is well deserved. I was happy the UTEA wanted to acknowledge that and be placed on the calendar.

Mr. Arminio stated what is the reasoning behind Easter Monday off when we can add it to be the 4th snow day and the other one is the half-day before Christmas vacation – it is a Friday and Christmas Eve is 3-4 days later – why is there a half day and what is the reasoning. Mr. Tatum stated the staff likes to get an advance day. That is something that is really not big for me. I don't have any rationale behind it – it can be a full day or half-day. Mr. Arminio stated I did this once before and I got a lot of flak from a teacher that lives with me. Mr. Tatum stated you need to take a look at attendance on those days as well and that is another factor.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated January 22-28 – the high school kids have half days – what is the rationale behind those. Mr. Tatum stated the exams – we have been trying to incorporate that into the calendar for at least two-years. There is some time designed for teachers to grade.

Mrs. Richardson stated if we have an all-day pre-school program – do you think that would increase the number of students which could possibly increase our aide? Mr. Tatum stated I think it would increase revenue, we have staff members here who are available to teach a class already and not hire any brand new people. I think there is some space available in some of the buildings and right now we have teachers that are doing a half time job because our enrollment is actually lower. I think this is an opportunity to help our parents because they were trying for this for a number of years and I think part of the reason why our enrollment is low is because we are bringing students in and the parents aren't able to transport their children to another location and now they would be in school all day long. Down the road this may catch on and may cause an increase in the revenue. Mrs. Richardson stated I think some parents will take them out of daycare and put them in pre-k and that would increase our enrollment and that increases our dollars. Mr. Tatum stated I'm not sure if there is State aide on pre-k. They were talking about giving us funding but I don't think they are in the head count. Anne, when you do the ASSA, do we? Mrs. Hart stated they just started counting the pre-k students last year – how much funding if it is the same as a full-time student I'm not sure. Mr. Tatum stated if the numbers increased I guess the answer would be yes. Mrs. Richardson stated and the governor is for it. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated we have to look into that grant. Mr. Tatum stated it would be full-time but right now we are half day. We will still maintain the half-day program but I don't know if it is going to be a lottery – we are still in the discussion stages of that. The whole idea is to get the program approved and look at the logistics and there will be fees as of right now. Parents will have access to aftercare. Mrs. Richardson stated I think it will be cheaper than childcare.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated there is a grant and I know he is going to approve it and it is \$53 million so we need to make sure that we are part of that grant – he is calling it a “pre-k for all” which was the “three-k for all” for three and four year olds so we want to make sure that we are part of this grant that is going to be available for districts that have a pre-k program. We should

be looking into that. Mr. Tatum stated we had at least one school volunteer to be one of the pilots – possibly Hannah Caldwell and some years back when Hannah Caldwell was renovated it was renovated for pre-school expansion and that was the whole purpose behind that and then Governor Corzine did not get reelected and therefore that fell by the wayside. We have facilities that will facilitate some of these programs as well.

FISCAL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Mr. Monge gave an update on the Fiscal Committee meeting. Mr. Monge stated we actually combined Operations and Fiscal today. We tried it out and it worked well.

We spent a lot of time talking about special services – that is a big conversation that happened during the budget meeting and on this agenda we have a number of contracts and there are a lot of questions that I posed over the last day and we discussed all those conversations that we had. One of the things we were asking questions about – I looked at last year's agenda and 75% of this is cut and paste from last year. The only thing that is changing in terms of the contract is a rate and the not to exceed number. I had an issue last year and asking questions about competitive process and things of that nature. There is one contract whose not to exceed number was 245% greater than last year. There may be a reason for it but the reality is that this gets put on agendas and Mr. Brennan has a hard time being able to answer questions and Mrs. Conti has tried to answer some of these questions. Instead of going down the same rabbit hole and we know we have an issue in trying to get our arms around what the issue is and one of the things we made very clear in our conversations and I have said it in my email earlier is the answer can't be we have to be tougher on IEPs – that can't be the answer – beyond that being the law that is the assumption – we are not saying that anybody is taking that approach but the tough thing to do is to really look into the way we operate the department and if there are ways to be able to have efficiencies where we can save money but not hurt our level of services that we are providing.

With that said, the recommendation that we came up with is to pull those items and my understanding is that waiting one month to approve these won't hurt but it will be great if we could have a meeting with the committee and your folks and the business department, Ms. Conti and be able to get our arms around how the budget is presented. Mr. Brennan and Mr. Vieira did a global budget presentation but there is a lot of things that Ms. Conti brought to light and I was the only guy that was part of that conversation. I told Ms. Conti that I'm tired of being the one who asks the questions and I want an audience so I think it is good to be able to have the committee there to ask the questions to see how numbers are derived and what we could do differently because otherwise we are going to have the same conversation next year.

Mr. Arminio asked what specifically? Mr. Monge stated F-16 through F-32, F-34. My next question is there anything here – F-16 was an increase. F-17 through F-32, F-34 and F-36 - this is not pointing fingers, it is just to make sure that special services and the business department is on the same page and that the Board members can be on the same page so we can report back to the greater board and hopefully have some strategies on how we can do things differently. If not, what is it all for; there has to be some change of action to make sure that we are able to do a better job of controlling expenses. We obviously know the enrollment numbers

are higher and that is part of it but there are other things that we can potentially do because there seems to be an upward trend.

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked what is your recommendation? Mr. Monge stated that we would table it for next month's meeting but in the interim have a sit down and give an opportunity for Mrs. Conti. Mrs. Conti stated here is my concern – one if we delay to June and there is a question regarding the services again, July 1 begins the 18-19 school year and we must be ready to go to service our students. I understand your concern – are we being efficient by selecting the agencies and the vendors that we select but over the years the agencies and vendors are the ones that we actually tried and utilized and have been successful for us. If you remember, last year you asked us to provide rationales for why we had those vendors and we did. Some vendors take P.O.'s – some are because of availability and some vendors can't be ready to go by the mandated timeline. We have to be mindful of all of that. Also what has been successful as far as giving our children good services. All of that is done by experience as we go along. We can always look into other agencies and vendors along the way and we certainly can have that discussion throughout the year but to have a break in service for the children is my greatest concern. The other thing too and I agree that the special education department has been a big topic of conversation and I make decisions and it can't interfere with the IEP team and it is not based on money. As the director of the department I must be mindful of being fiscally responsible. We still have to service the needs of the students and sometimes you say to me why do we have a 150% increase or 200% increase and the best we can do is to take a look at prior year/current year activities and base that and project that out to the services. If we are sitting at an IEP meeting, there is no way to project that over the year. For example, CP – F-16 – if there is a great increase in that in a year it could be 4-5 more students might need augmentative evaluations because typically students that receive augmentative evaluations may not have verbal skills and if we hear in general that a student has difficulties verbalizing, we would be remised and not saying that this student would need an augmentative evaluation to take a look at what we can do to make this student successful. The other thing that I heard is that we also have to be mindful – it is not just the quantitative, there is a qualitative portion to this as well and that means we have to give students the appropriate placement then we must consider least restrictive environment and as any parent of a student with an IEP knows, just like any other civil rights, we do not want to segregate students and yes there may be a cost associated with including students and inclusion but this is what we need to work towards and for and getting students into the community and to be able to be part of what we hear in our mission statement – the global society and every day of the week I will back that and I must say for the families, the students and the department as well as the staff, kudos to all of them because we have worked very hard. We may not always agree and that does happen but as long as we all come to the table with the spirit that we are making the decisions in the best interest of the student any day of the week than it is o.k. I do want to commend the staff of the department and the staff of the entire district because it takes all of us to make them successful so what I'm asking for you to do is to at least look at these services this month and we can always have the conversation. I am fine with that and we should always take a look – maybe there is an agency or vendor that can provide a service better or within a different amount as long as it doesn't sacrifice the services for the kids and that is my thoughts on this.

Mr. Monge stated I don't think we disagree and you have heard that in conversations that we have had. What ends up happening is we have this 100% increase – we still don't have a handle on that – having a conversation with you earlier and Mr. Brennan – that conversation needs to be had in openness because looking back a couple of years and I said this in my email, we have been at about \$600,000 in that line item but someplace we went up \$1 million. Either we are looking at the wrong line or the reality is not just this year we were under budget. Mrs. Conti stated I don't want under budget to be misunderstood. Mr. Brennan stated not by you. Mrs. Conti stated we have difficulty budgeting for our department. Mr. Monge stated that happened a couple of years in a row. Ultimately at the end of the day there has to be some policing here because the last folks that find out is the Board. We end up having transfers happening to cover gaps but we don't see why these gaps are being covered. That was the recommendation and again to Mrs. Conti's point, we don't want a break in services – that was not the idea. The idea was if something that can be done – there has to be something – who disagrees with the fact.

Mrs. Minneci stated I agree that something needs to be done but I also agree that we need to, in my opinion, approve this and work on it. Mr. Benaquista stated as always we are getting these people approved, but it doesn't necessarily mean that we are using them July 1st. Mrs. Conti stated some we may not but we never know what comes across our desk. Mr. Benaquista stated when it comes to the table maybe talk about some other options out there – other vendors that we can bring on board and cost savings ideas so that we are at least ready to go for the kids for the ESY program. Mrs. Conti stated as I said we can have this ongoing conversation and talk about it and I welcome it.

Mrs. Minneci stated and some of that money won't be used because you are not going to use the total that you have there. Mrs. Conti stated we ask for a not-to-exceed amount but that doesn't mean we are going to utilize it all. They are there and available if a student has a need and I can't always wait for it to get on the agenda and have it approved.

Mr. Arminio stated point of order Mr. Griggs – next week if we are going to pull it someone has to make a motion and we would have to vote on it to pull it. Mr. Griggs stated without getting into the policy, your policy does give the president the right to pull it off next month. Mr. Arminio stated it would be pulled next week not tonight. Mr. Griggs stated you can do either. Mr. Monge if I could say one thing here from experience, what is being looked for tonight is the authorization, not to spend all this money, it is just to be able to go to these agencies and order this test and that type of thing. It is in next year's budget and not being spent this year. I don't know what is going to change between now and next month relative to the services that she is looking for or if you are looking for a cheaper vendor, that is a different process. She is not saying that she wants to spend all of this money, she is just saying if I need to send a student to a neurologist, I can issue the purchase order and I encourage you to have that discussion about the nuts and bolts and how you find these people. Like Dr. Farber, he is so limited now and it is hard to get him in my experience. Mrs. Conti stated we will sit around with other directors in the County and we all ask who do you use because sometimes the availability is not always out there as one would think.

Mrs. Minneci stated some of the resolutions are for RNs and LPNs so I am assuming they are backups in case the other ones are not available. Mrs. Conti stated it is very difficult to get nursing services especially when you need a nurse just for transportation in the a.m. or the p.m. because there is only a 2-hour window where if a nurse can take a whole day job they are going to do that but we are trying to be fiscally responsible and not hire a nurse for the entire day just for the a.m. and the p.m. run but there is not a lot of availability so we put multiple nursing services on.

Mr. Monge stated I think we are missing the point that is being made. I tell Mrs. Conti all the time, we are not necessarily saying this one, that one, other than the not-to-exceed stuff -- to me if you have a not-to-exceed number, there is a budget number behind it that says you are not going to exceed this because this is my budget. I don't know the rationale behind it and I'm not looking for it right now but the point is we as Board members get this information and we are supposed to make these decisions and then all of sudden we approve it and then we hear at the end of the year that the numbers are all out of wack and we are transferring money but what is the solution. It is troubling when Mr. Brennan has a tough time and he gets the stuff and we say hey Mr. Brennan what is going on and the feedback is you have to speak with Mrs. Conti and we keep on going like this. If we're not going to be in the same situation next year, then what is the plan -- what is the strategic plan that is going to disallow us or at least try to protect us from not being there. That is what the conversation ultimately was and this ends up being a starting point where we say here it is this is for next year. So what are we doing differently from this year to next? This is what we thought was a starting point and if there is another idea behind that, I think we would all be ok with that openness but that was the idea here. Because otherwise we will be here again next year.

Mr. Griggs stated I agree with you, leave it on the agenda at the regular meeting. The President can determine if he removes it to the following month. Mr. Monge stated or the Superintendent. Mr. Griggs stated no, the Board President -- that is Board policy 9121.

Dr. Francis stated can we make a motion to table it. Mr. Griggs stated no. It is a work session. We are not voting on it. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated next week. Mr. Griggs stated next week sure -- when it is on your agenda -- if you read your policy the president can remove that from the agenda to be considered at the following regular meeting. Dr. Francis stated make a motion to table it. We as Board members can make a motion to table it. Mr. Griggs stated not if he removes it from the agenda. Mr. Arminio stated you can make a motion but then it has to be voted on. Mr. Monge stated the point we are trying to make here is that we need a strategic plan to make sure that our business office and our special services department are on the same page and if there are changes, that it is coming back to the Board and so we are actually budgeting correctly and we are approving budgets correctly and at the end of the year it is going to be some resemblance of what we spent and what we budgeted for.

Mr. Tatum stated the issue I'm hearing here is the process that we engage in to determine who the services are that we use. I know there is a process. There is a scope of service that we look for in your vendors and of course there is a price. I don't know how many quotations -- 2-3 whatever you need to get in order to make a determination but I think it could be a simultaneous process and that is if someone is found that offers the same service and quality for a better price,

then don't you have the ability to say that for the following year and I guess Mrs. Coti would be the one that would determine that this person has a reputation and use that vendor as opposed to using that vendor. Mr. Griggs stated that is absolutely right.

Mr. Tatum stated if you approve the vendors in June, they are still ready to go July 1 so you can go either way unless of course there are some lead time that you need to engage in before that time. I don't know if that is in the agreement. Mr. Griggs stated some are not per se agreements you are just saying I am going to use Dr. Farber to do psychiatric workups and if you have a student in your ESY program and you need to book that, you need to have the authorization to do that. I understand what Jeff is saying. Mrs. Conti stated and you have other compliance that goes on. Mr. Tatum stated it sounds like some of the vendors we use meet those requirements. I think with the contingency to examine others and then at the same time if we have someone who is better qualified and able to fulfill that scope of service, then when we can go with the one that may be of lesser cost factor and move that into the following year.

Mrs. Minneci stated if they work together when these issues come up so he can answer the questions to the Fiscal Committee. If they work together it makes your job easier because he has all the answers to the questions. Mr. Brennan stated you sent an email about the finance resolutions those that pertain to special education, I asked Mrs. Conti and Connie to address and you did. I was asked tonight to give more detail on it and I don't have more detail on it I just have what Mrs. Conti offered. I am not the director of special education – we need to work together. I don't have that knowledge. Mrs. Conti stated you understand the numbers piece, I understand the compliance and the educational component so when we sit down and talk about the quantitative piece and the qualitative piece because you always just can't crunch the numbers, it is also based on law and human beings and needs and the human factor to it and also to realistically project what the needs are for such large department.

Mrs. Richardson stated I know the needs are great and you never know from month to month how much it is going to increase and I think the Board gets surprised when we find out how much money it is costing for the IEP program so if that could be shared at certain points in time – 6-month period – we spent 60% of what we have budgeted so that we can be aware that this is becoming a problem. Just so we know so at the end of the year with oh we are really in bad shape right now. Mr. Brennan stated that is an idea but how about if Mrs. Conti joins us at the Fiscal Committee meeting. Mr. Tatum stated it is fine with me. Mrs. Richardson stated I know you don't have control over the cost of what is going on with the students – you can't foresee but at least if we are informed. Mrs. Conti stated I think it is good talk about things on a monthly basis. I welcome talking about what we do for the department. There is nothing here that we don't want to talk about – we need to talk about it because I think education is good to understand what the needs are and why we make certain decisions. What are we a quarter of the budget? Mr. Brennan stated \$37 million. Mrs. Conti stated that is salary so you have to be careful when you say that. We should talk about these things and to make sure that you can see – here are the out-of-district placements, here is the cost factor attached, why did you go up in that so much in that one month – we are not talking about anything personal but it could be that we had five students move in with IEPs that had out-of-district placement and it could be as simple as that or there can be trends and best practices that come out of Trenton or mandates that come out. Just like anything else in education, when we talk about trends in curriculum, and

there are trends getting students out into the committee and inclusion is not a trend that is the way life should be. We should talk about these things and I'm o.k. with that and whatever you decide and whatever you need me to do to bring clarity to a situation.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated as the District goes forward for the 2018-2019 and especially when it comes to special services, we need to think for intervention before referrals. How do we identify our special needs students in K-2 before they get to the 3rd grade level when they are full blown into a referral phase. I think as a district you guys have a lot to do in terms of what do we do for intervention first to fix the issues before we get to the full blown referral and then we are gone by that point. Mrs. Conti stated in many different facets too because when they take a look at our State Performance Plan Indicator they can look at suspension rates, they can look at anything like that so what is put into the general ed side always affects us because we are together – there is no separate and that is why we have to partner and that is why it is collaborative.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I think that there just needs to be a plan because every year we have seen a big increase in referrals for special services but I have seen a solid intervention plan before they get to that referral point. What are we doing for the students to meet them to make sure that we are doing the right interventions for them so that it does not get to the point where they need a referral for LD. What are we doing? Mr. Tatum stated I think that is part of the mandate that we have now from the County office. I had a conference with Mrs. Conti last week about that and that is one thing budgetary we are being looked at for. I have been questioned about the INRS process. I have been questioned about what the children will need – 504 as opposed to a full blown IEP. That question has come before and directly from the County and it is something that we are looking at. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated if a student needs a scribe why does the student have an IEP when he can get a 504? It doesn't make sense.

Mr. Monge stated thank you. The thing is taking those strategies ultimately at the end of the day saves money or can save money. You are starting on a strategy and at the end of the day it is a strategy and implementation. Implementation to make sure that Mr. Brennan is able to answer questions because there is continuity with that department and his department. We need a plan. We have been hearing this for a while and when the numbers go up and up and what it does is put a highlight on the kids that need the services and it is not fair to them or their parents.

Mr. Monge presented the Fiscal and Planning Committee agenda.

Mr. Monge stated on Phoenix – the point that I have been trying to make is that contract is for disclosing agent which is fine and that is the \$800 but also there is a contract for municipal advisory services. So what I was saying about that part of the services is if we do need that service, that is a service we should be RFPing. It is not a \$800 service. Mr. Brennan stated it is compliance. Mr. Monge stated compliance but not for the municipal advisory services but Mr. Griggs stated but that is what it says in the contract and that is the point. Mr. Brennan stated it is just for compliance.

Mr. Nufrio arrived at meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Moved by Mr. Monge, seconded by Mrs. Williams, that the following resolution be adopted:

F-7. PRE-APPROVE DISTRICTWIDE STUDENT FIELD TRIPS

Pre-approve districtwide student field trip destinations and purposes pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.8 in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mr. Nufrio

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Nufrio stated thank you Mrs. Minneci and good evening everyone. I had a family function to attend my daughter's thesis presentation.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS:

Mrs. Richardson presented the Operations Committee agenda.

Mrs. Richardson stated the Committee would like to remove O-2 from the agenda – ARAMARK – we wanted to do a little more research on other providers. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I know we were supposed to do a survey. Mrs. Richardson stated we are not sure if it is a 5-year contract with them. Mr. Brennan stated it is a 5-year contract. Mr. Monge stated it is renewable every year so the question was – is this request here above and beyond? Is this part of their contract? or is this a request as part of their renewal? Mr. Griggs stated it is part of their contract. It is a typical ARAMARK contract. The contract says it can be renewed upon terms and conditions to be agreed to between the parties including the increase.

Mrs. Richardson stated as a committee we did not know if there was an “at will” statement in the contract. Mr. Griggs stated in terms of terminating their contract? I would have to look at it but it is probably more so mutual agreement of the parties. If you don't have mutual agreement then you don't renew. I say that but I need to look at it. Mrs. Richardson stated we did get a lot of negative responses regarding the food service. Mrs. Higgins stated we wanted to take an opportunity to figure out more about the contract and see what the options are and take a survey. Mr. Griggs stated I can only tell you from my experience that this has come up in other districts and these are only good for five years and there has been a push back to food service companies saying we need better menus, student, parent and teacher surveys – you have an onsite manager and you meet with that person and they can meet with a board committee to talk about the concerns. If it is all about the food concerns then that may be one option to address. If it is about some type of an increase in this contract and the price that you are charging your consumers and that type of thing, that is another story. To me is you list your concerns and maybe they are both.

Mrs. Higgins stated we talked about the quality and onsite inspection and doing an evaluation and making them more accountable for providing quality food. Mr. Griggs stated that is not unusual and that is a normal thing in districts.

Mr. Monge stated I didn't get an opportunity to look at the contract but this seems how it reads, you confirming that they have been efficient and affective and here goes what we want as part of our renewal. This wasn't part of an RFP when they got this renewal. It never went through an RFP process. Mr. Griggs stated they probably bid it and there were renewal provisions in the contract. That is usually how it works. You bid it, you go out five years and then there are renewal provisions. There was a bid before your time.

Mr. Monge stated when they received this five-year agreement, it was on the agenda to vote on and I don't know Mr. Nufrio if you were President at the time but it was thrown at the Board as the contract is up and we need to act and so there wasn't even an RFP process so there wasn't anyone else that bid on the opportunity and that was the issue. I think we have issue with service and the like but also the business aspect of it all. They talk about their increases 3% and other stuff and we have our own issues. If there is an opportunity to save money and enhance the quality of the food and the service and we wanted to see how if there is an opportunity to explore that. Mr. Griggs stated I would suggest a meeting with ARAMARK representative – the regional vice president for this area. These contracts also must be approved by Trenton and they are pretty precise on what they require in particular the nutritional standards – free and reduced; what is a reimbursable meal – there is a checklist that they have to go through. I suggest that you meet with the regional person. Mr. Brennan stated I will contact Deb Smith.

Mr. Monge stated if these terms are a requested increase to what they have, do we have an opportunity to negotiate this and is it an at-will contract. Is this something that we can just go out and RFP so we can try to see if we get a competitive offer from someone else to make sure that we are in the right ballpark as it pertains to what we are paying and what we are getting from them. Mr. Griggs stated I just would have to look at it but I do think it is renewable but it has to be mutual between the partners. Mr. Benaquista stated I do agree with Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Higgins are saying. We are talking about a contract but we need to send out that survey to faculty members and students and parents. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated we have been asking for that. Mr. Benaquista stated but the people eating the food is the students and the teachers and faculty members. We shouldn't even get to a contract if the survey is saying that it is horrible. I know I have received questions from parents on options for vegetarians, it is not enough. I know it is very hard to put a really good meal for the amount of money but you can give a lot more options that are healthier for the same cost. It is not about the easiest meal. We fight districtwide – we have a lot of diabetic kids in this district and the amount of times that the meals change is unacceptable because these parents are planning on these kids eating this stuff and the meal changes and it takes a good 15-20 minutes to recalculate everything to make sure that the insulin is correct. The survey would do a good job to let us know what direction we need to go.

Mr. Nufrio stated the only problem we might see with that is this is for the 2018-19 school year – we have summer programs that we have to provide food for these children. I would think the most important aspect of looking further into this to the committee members is to (1) see the dates and (2) see the legalities of it and (3) how fast if in fact it is required, after

meeting with them, will we have enough window of time to put out an RFP and comply with the regulations pertaining to RFPs. I certainly don't want to get into that scenario again where the 60-day notice was violated.

Mr. Benaquista stated if we hypothetically go with another vendor, to shift all that over, I think we have to look at this now for the following year and do our homework and maybe things can get better. Mr. Brennan stated first thing to do is reach out to the regional manager and then the onsite manager. Mr. Benaquista stated I think we need to do surveys. Mr. Nufrio stated we won't be able to do that in time. Mrs. Richardson stated now for next year.

Mr. Monge stated the first thing we need to figure out is it negotiable. They are basically asking us for increases and is that negotiable. Mr. Nufrio stated the only thing I recall about increases is that they have to first be run by the State and if they did then they were approved and if so then it means other vendors may have done the same thing. It is not an easy answer or fix here. I'm not a spokesperson for them – in fact several years back those that were on the Board with me recall that I too questioned the services but it is not an easy fix and it is not an overnight fix and it takes time and here we are in the middle of May and again we are talking about this. We should have been talking about this in January. Mrs. Richardson stated it didn't come up until today. Mr. Monge stated we talked about the survey and this RFP last year. This is annually renewed so we don't have to wait the fifth year for an RFP. We have to be conscious of the process but when is the soonest we can go to an RFP. Mr. Nufrio asked do we know what year we are in? Mr. Brennan stated year four. Mr. Nufrio stated the logistics do not support doing something now for September. It is impossible. We have time. Mrs. Higgins stated we still have time to meet and to talk about it. Mr. Nufrio stated absolutely that is a given. Not to demean your point – that needs to be done. I have a question for you Mr. Tatum. You have been the Superintendent – would you say the complaints amounted to an enough of a basis of a more serious look into the services. Mr. Tatum stated I think the complaints were greater in prior years. Nor have we have surveyed or looked into any food service. I have seen food service companies change and it is based upon the feedback that we get from various surveys. We are going into year 4-5 – to me it makes sense to do the research because if you are going to turn around and renew this contract will be up for renewal for the final year next year and at that point you will have to make the determination as to whether it is the best prices. I believe when you talk about increases in prices there is also a bump in federal subsidies as well. I think they pass along that cost to you because it may be a higher reimbursement. Mr. Griggs stated with these contracts, school districts don't want to have the budget money in their own budget to offset the loss – that is always the focus and the food service – it is the participation rate and their ability to keep that up.

Mr. Nufrio stated can you do your due diligence in time for us to review this again next week. Mr. Brennan stated I will reach out to her tomorrow. Mr. Monge asked can we get a copy of the contract? Mr. Brennan stated yes. Mr. Nufrio stated furnish it to the Operations or all the Board members. Mr. Griggs – and your interpretation of it and input on it.

Moved by Mrs. Richardson, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the following resolution be adopted:

O-3. APPROVE REQUEST FROM TOWNSHIP REQUESTING USE OF JEFFERSON SCHOOL

Approve letter from Township of Union requesting use of the Jefferson School parking lot for the ceremony dedicating the Vauxhall Meeting Room to the late Congressman Donald M. Payne Sr. on May 19, 2018, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Monge stated we confirmed that it will be no cost to the District.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Mrs. Higgins, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Nufrio

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Dr. Francis

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Richardson stated we have two discussion items – letter from Concerned Citizens of Vauxhall & Vicinity Civic Association requesting the use of Jefferson School to hold a Job Fair on June 2, 2018 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and requesting waiver of fees and certificate of insurance requirement.

The concern of the Committee was that the certificate of insurance requirement and if something would happen. I was advised that they could get a one day insurance. Mr. Nufrio stated the letter does elude to that – they also may be assessed to pay for custodial services. They are requesting that be waived as well as the liability. Mrs. Richardson stated the custodial is not a problem, it was the insurance that was a problem. Mr. Nufrio asked why would custodial not be a problem? They are asking that to be waived along with the insurance. They realized that there may be an assessment of the custodial fees. What is the Committees position on that? Mrs. Richardson stated on what it says, we assume they are going to pay for it. Mr. Nufrio stated if you read further it says different – they are asking for waivers on both. What is the Committees position? Mrs. Richardson stated we are concerned about the insurance and that is our problem. It is school property and if something happens it would be a liability.

Mr. Griggs stated the insurance is part of your Board policy. Mr. Nufrio asked can we have a response to this by the Business Office. Because of Board policy the insurance would have to be provided. Mr. Monge stated this has happened before and the recommendation was for the one-day insurance. It is not a material amount of money. We would offer some suggestions. We had talked about that we were going to and this goes to the other item as well – we should not be taking on events at a cost to the District. If we are going to start, then these two events would be the first two that we would take into consideration.

Mr. Nufrio stated I'm concerned about any and all events. If we are going to take a stance because of budgetary constraints, we are looking to reduce and eliminate any additional expenses that are incurred because of these events then perhaps something needs to be drafted to explain that so it doesn't project that. What is the Board's position on this? Perhaps it requires a straw poll.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I think at the last meeting we spoke about this and we agreed as a Board that moving forward that this is something that we should do. I think that was agreed upon already. Mr. Nufrio stated I don't know if it was agreed upon; I know we talked about it. I don't believe we took any official action and maybe that is what we need to do.

Mr. Griggs stated I think the business office should develop a letter that explains the Board's responsibility and the Board's policy and any concern about liability. Your insurance would become the first line of liability versus the second line of liability. The other part is to call Fairview and ask them if they are able to get a one-day certificate. Mr. Brennan stated we did that last year. Mr. Griggs stated then you take that information and provide it to the requester and say we can offer you this lead to purchase this insurance. I think you should follow your Board policy. Mr. Nufrio asked can we also formalize that in a resolution so we can vote on it next week so that it does come through as a Board official action.

Mr. Benaquista asked what about the fees? Mr. Nufrio stated the fees are what we are concerned about, the insurance is an automatic. Mr. Benaquista stated I think it would be better to draft a letter effective July 1st – because of budgetary constraints or whatever the letter wants to say. Mr. Monge stated I think the realization of what the cost was to the District – I don't think anyone really knew that all these costs were being incurred. Mr. Benaquista stated because the budget was in a better position, it never really came to a head and I think moving forward so it isn't a question every month and we are approving things, that those are the first two costs that are reimbursed – custodial and security, if security is needed.

Mr. Griggs stated with respect to No. 2 - letter from Union Township Chamber of Commerce requesting use of the Union High School facility site for the Chamber's 8th Annual Mayor's Day 5K Run, September 23, 2018 – they have their own insurance but Barry advises that typically Board maintenance employees are involved in this and that gets back to charging them, according to your Board policy. I don't know if you have charged in the past.

Mr. Nufrio stated obviously the policy specifies for insurance. My recollection is the services we did in fact waive that for certain entities. If we are going to make it across the Board decision, which is fine, every Board member gets to vote and we make that decision and then it is formalized that all costs will be absorbed by the entity as opposed to in the past where some entities because of certain relationships. Mr. Arminio stated there are fees that we can waive, not necessarily the custodian fees, the fees like renting the gym is \$1,000 and renting a classroom is \$500 – those are the fees that can be waived. Like Holy Spirit basketball, they cost no custodial fees because it is during the operations of a school so we can waive the fee to use the gym because that costs us nothing. Waiving the fee for custodians and insurance is a different matter and I think they are two separate things.

Mr. Nufrio stated it is still the same word "fees". We need to specify and then we need to come to a consensus and vote on as to exactly what fees may be waived. I don't think we can do this as a cover for everything but that will be decided by the Board. As far as renting the facilities, that is probably the more expensive aspect of it all.

Mr. Monge stated it could be at no cost to the District – that would capture security, maintenance – it is a very simple statement that could be encompassing of any fees that are associated with it.

Mrs. Richardson asked would we separate – organization that are going to cost us money would have to reimburse us and organizations that aren't going to cost us money, don't have to? Mr. Monge stated we are not going to rent out any facilities at a cost to the District. That doesn't necessarily mean that we are not going to charge fees for renting of a classroom. Mr. Arminio stated when Springfield borrowed our football field, they paid custodial fees, rental on the field – whatever that cost was and then there was the North-South All-Star Game used the field – we waived the rental of the field but they picked up the police cost. Those are the things that we would have to specify and I think that has to be done individually. If it is a 501(c) organization and they are not costing us anything as far as custodial fees, would we then charge them to use the gym? Mr. Monge stated the point is it will be no cost to the District. No one is going to use our facilities and it is going to cost us money to pay custodians. Mrs. Minneci stated so if they are going to be here when a custodian or guard is not going to be there, then they would have to pay for that. Mrs. Richardson stated we have to specify in there that they need their own insurance. Mr. Griggs stated let me look at your policy and/or regulation should detail most of what you are saying. Mr. Arminio asked don't we approve each year the cost of the rental of facilities? Mrs. Regis-Darby stated yes. Mr. Nufrio stated it is a mixed bag of items that need to be defined.

Mr. Tatum stated there was a time years back, that actually adopted a utility surcharge that was supposed to be passed on to every vendor – I think back to when Mr. Perkins was the Board President. I don't know if that is still in effect. Mr. Nufrio stated if we have things that are already detailed and defined in the policies, then it would seem logical that the Policy Committee would have to draft a new policy to make changes in it. We could actually run a resolution that would be counted with the policy. Mr. Griggs stated yes. Mr. Nufrio stated we need to know what the policy stipulates and what we can produce and something else that may in fact violate the policy. Mr. Benaquista stated it is Policy 1330 and there is a thing that talks about custodial fees and building security fees based on what type of “class” they are – so there is some detail to it. Mr. Nufrio stated if it is so, then it may require some policy changes.

Mr. Arminio asked are we going to vote on them next week? Mr. Monge stated I would suggest that we put them as resolutions with stipulations so we know it is not going to be a cost to the District and have Mr. Griggs do a little research and what that means. We can always make a resolution and massage it to what we want anyway. Mr. Nufrio stated first let's look at the policy. Mr. Monge stated I agree. I'm talking about these two items and making it a voting resolution. Mr. Nufrio stated I don't think we can give a definite answer on these items until the policy has been thoroughly looked at and then make a decision as to how we in fact may have to amend the policy. I think that is the way to go and I'm going to follow the lead of the counsel.

Mr. Monge stated let me clarify what I'm saying. Mr. Nufrio stated I would rather let the legal department handle it. Mr. Monge stated we have in the past approved usage of our facilities under certain circumstances – contingencies. We could go ahead and put this on to vote next week under the contingencies that it is not going to be at a cost to the District. They will

have to have insurance, pay for maintenance and security, as necessary. We have done that before. Mr. Griggs stated I'm going to suggest that we look at the policy and maybe that policy will have to be changed relative to future usage and based upon that you will probably see something on the agenda but we need to look at the policy first because we have to be consistent with your policy at this point because that is your policy.

Mr. Arminio stated both of these organizations have to plan. There is a lot of planning involved and September 23rd may seem far away but it comes very quickly. Knowing if or not there is something available is extremely important.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated for the June 2nd job fair they want to get a flyer out immediately to all the high school seniors because they are looking for jobs in the summer. Mr. Griggs stated let me look at the policy. We will put a resolution on here consistent with your policy. Also Mr. Brennan will confirm the one-day insurance policy that you can tell the user about.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Minneci presented the Personnel Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Nufrio asked is there anything in P-1 that would require voting tonight because of timelines? Mr. Benaquista stated no not tonight.

Mr. Monge stated one of the things that I brought up to Mr. Brennan was the residency investigators – just to make sure that we don't have in our budget something that is consistent with what we had last year because if we aren't going to do re-registration this year. Last year we increased that budget to cover re-registration so if we are not doing re-registration, we shouldn't need that level of budget for residency. Mr. Tatum stated we are not doing that. Mr. Brennan stated this is for summer residency. Mr. Tatum stated this is for summer residency – where we have new to the district, move out of the district, or we have returned mail so the residency officers are available to go out and do home checks for that purpose. We put this on every year. Our goal this year was to change the re-registration process and unfortunately that hasn't gotten off the ground. We did have one meeting regarding our Genesis system. It is a not to exceed number – on an as needed basis and it doesn't mean that everyone on this list will be working. Mr. Nufrio suggested changing the language to make it more clear. Mr. Griggs stated “approve residency investigators that work during summer 2018, as needed, as follows”.

POLICY COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Richardson stated I received an email from Mr. Griggs regarding the policies that he made changes on. I sent it out to the Committee members. I was fine with them. Mr. Arminio was fine with them. I am just waiting for Mary Lynn. Mrs. Williams stated I didn't get a chance to review all of them just yet. Mr. Nufrio stated as soon as you finalize or had a chance to review them - do you think they will be ready to be posted for reading next week? Mrs. Richardson stated Mr. Griggs stated he would share it with the administration. Mr. Griggs stated I recommended that to the Policy Committee. What I sent you summarizes the changes to the policies so the policies need to be rewritten and that is what is presented to committee. Mr. Arminio stated before Gerry I worked with Jim and we rewrote it together and now that Greg is

in charge we would have to work it out. Mr. Griggs stated Greg's office would finalize the draft of the policy and that is the draft that would go out to the Board members for first reading – after review by the administration. They will get the information tomorrow. You will let her know if you are o.k. with it. Mrs. Richardson stated they will send it to us and we will review again and then it will be put on the agenda. Mr. Griggs stated you will have to distribute the policies with the agenda. Mr. Nufrio stated if you are not ready to get that done by next week. It is o.k. You guys figure it all out and Paul will distribute to Mr. Tatum and whoever else. When it is all looked at and ready to present, then we have the first reading. It may not happen next Tuesday.

RESIDENCY COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Williams stated the residency resolution will be approved next week.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Higgins stated the IT Department is working on the budgets and moneys were cut. We need to keep lease agreements, licensing, maintenance and things like that and some things that may fall to the wayside are the Smart Boards may not get fixed and some other things that Mrs. Paul is working on now.

The elementary school infrastructure has been cut from the budget so we are not moving forward with that until 2019-20.

There is a parent workshop on internet safety on May 24th at the high school library. It will be livestreamed so they can view from home.

The main thing that we talked about is the new telephone equipment – the Cisco \$750,000 – what came out is it isn't \$750,000 – we need to add wiring and maintenance lines, extra lines, voice boxes and things like that. We really don't know what the total cost will be but we also know that is only one component of a larger safety strategy so our recommendation to Mrs. Paul is to get together with Mr. Benaquista who has attended seminars and has done a lot of research and figure out what that bigger strategy is and what are the needs. We don't certainly want to get into something and we find out that it is antiquated in a year, we can't support so that is our recommendation.

Mr. Benaquista stated at the end of June I'm going to a 4-day workshop in Trenton just dealing with security for schools. It is something new – first year mandated so I'm sure I'll hear a lot of information. They might tell us that they are coming out with other things that they want the schools to do. I will know more about that program and I do think it might be something to wait for that. I'm still waiting but I believe the government is coming out with grants for school security and I believe it is going to be matching. There are several companies we are working with that are keeping their ears open and let me know if they hear anything before us because sometimes they hear and then get in the district and say we need to write this grant together hoping that they will get some business. I am hoping to hear soon about grant money to help everyone.

Mrs. Higgins stated that would be great but it would also be great if the Technology Committee, the IT Department and yourself could regroup after that. Mr. Benaquista stated yes,

it is the last week of June – maybe early July. Mr. Nufrio stated maybe this could be one of the items that we need to talk about as well – August planning meeting – put that on your list for long-range planning projects to see if we can afford it and what it entails. Mr. Benaquista stated Mrs. Paul and myself met with several companies and there are a lot of components involved. We are really securing inside out. We really need to secure outside in moving forward. We have been talking about a button that automatically locks down all your doors. When a threat is outside you want to shut down your building. Right now we have a lot of money into cameras. That is all reactive; does it deter yes but it is also helping us if something happens. We want signals outside so people don't enter our buildings when we are in a lockdown. During drills we noticed some maintenance guys working on buildings or IT coming into building because they are not aware that we are in a lockdown. There is also a system that can tie into our District radios and every police car that is on the same frequency. We hit the lockdown button and every police car would get the message that Union went into a lockdown instantly – so if they are driving by the school they could be here before you go to that 911 channel so we would be ahead of the game if we went with something like that. Different things like that is really what we are looking at. Again we have security guards inside, we have cameras but we don't have anything to lock our doors immediately. I know Mr. Loessel is looking at another form of Plexiglas so there wouldn't be any shattering so things like that we are already working on. There are a lot of other things if we had grant money – I would feel secure from the outside in at a much higher level.

Mr. Nufrio stated the important thing is when you attend this conference in late June, if you learn anything at the conference or shortly thereafter with regards to grants than it would be important to bring it to the Board's attention, as well as Mr. Tatum, the deadlines because we don't want to miss deadlines. Mrs. Higgins asked do we have to wait for the conference? Mr. Benaquista stated I look at least twice a week to see if anything has been released and I haven't seen anything formal.

Mr. Nufrio stated according to the bulletins and anything else I read I'm not sure if it is going to happen but I hope I'm wrong.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Moved by Mr. Monge, seconded by Mrs. Williams that the Board concur with the bills listed in the permanent bound register appended to the minutes and be ordered for payment.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Monge stated what we still have outstanding is the issue as it pertains to the legal bills. We did not vote on the last legal bills and we did not bring them back up and that is still outstanding. This bill was over \$16,000 and up from \$14,000 from prior and probably \$6-7,000 more than we have averaged in the past. Our legal bill for the Board of Ed is now \$160,000 and we are transferring \$50,000 into that line item. I think that the original appropriation was probably \$100,000. Mr. Brennan stated it is two separate line items so it should be \$200,000. Mr. Griggs stated your appropriation is \$220,000. Mr. Monge stated it's split and I'm looking at the transfer adjustment that we are doing this month and we are transferring \$50,000 to the legal fees general ed. The larger point here is that we need to address this. I tried to offer a couple of approaches to offer clarity on these bills and we have to maintain. We are blowing through our

budget and it is stuff that is controllable. We had a huge issue at our last budget meeting where we have our Assistant Superintendents being land blasted for \$3,000 increase each, in all that they do and we are blowing through our legal bills at the rate of \$5-\$6,000 when there are a lot of things that we can control. I think that we need to get that leadership from our President and some assistance from Sciarillo and obviously Mr. Tatum.

Mr. Griggs stated our bills which again have been submitted for well over two years without question – when we submit bills, services that we provide are either through the Superintendent or through the Board President. Two, there is a certification required by State law that says those services had been delivered. Are you saying we are not delivering those services? Mr. Monge stated what I'm saying your services are not following Board policy. Mr. Griggs stated that is your opinion. Mr. Monge stated it is not my opinion, it is the policy. Mr. Griggs stated I have the policy – there are two people here that authorize us to work. It has always been that way. Mr. Monge stated you need both. Mr. Griggs stated no you don't. You need one, and the other one needs to know about it. I just want you to understand legal services and that to me is a Board policy issue. The services have been delivered. Mr. Monge stated it is not a Board policy issue, it is a Board issue. Mr. Nufrio stated could you let him answer. Mr. Griggs stated it is not about me. I'm telling you that the services have been delivered and only you are hanging up the bill. We provided the services, the services were requested – the services are very good and for the record in terms of your budget – in 2014-15, the budget was \$175,000 plus Jim Damato's salary. Mr. Monge stated that is apples and oranges Mr. Griggs. Mr. Nufrio stated this is not a fun issue, let the man finish. Mr. Griggs stated I don't think this is funny because the fact of the matter is you don't understand the budget. We provide the services – do you question our services? Do you understand that? Because last time you misrepresented to the public that the legal fees were over budget; that was a material misrepresentation – the amount of money paid year to date is \$169,000 and the budget is \$220,000 – that is a misrepresentation. If you have other reasons that you are bringing this up that is fine but what I'm saying to you is the services have been delivered and they have been certified as correct as they are required by State law and nothing has occurred in the last 2-1/2 years so you are turning our bill into a budget issue. If you have issues with Board policy and things of that nature but in my mind we were requested to provide the services and we provided those services and they were submitted and never questioned in the past.

Mr. Nufrio stated I would like to clarify. Mr. Monge stated he is talking to me. Mr. Nufrio stated you like to dominate the time and that is why we are here til midnight sometimes. I am in charge of the meeting and I'm calling you out of order and I would ask you to respect that and that means you stop. When Mr. Griggs eluded to two individuals, I would love to take the credit for a lot of the work that they do but in fact that is not my doing. A great deal of the work is special services and central office and I'm not privy to the times that Mr. Tatum or Gerry or Annie or Mr. Brennan contact the Board Attorney or their offices and their services is not just relegated to that. They handle so many things and I will point one out this evening – you are asking him to review things that we need to be able to put together comfortably as a resolution so that we don't violate policy. Do you think that is free? That is not gratis. We either operate without an attorney or we operate with an attorney. My vote is definitely with an attorney. None of us here are legal eagles. Aspiration is also my feeling too Mrs. Darby. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I just don't like the screaming in my ears. Mr. Nufrio stated I wasn't screaming

sometimes I have to speak louder. I don't know what you are getting out Mr. Monge and I believe refusing to pay that bill is definitely a violation. Mr. Griggs stated it is a breach of contract.

Mr. Monge stated you want clarification. Mr. Nufrio stated I don't want clarification, he asked for it. Mr. Monge stated let me offer it. Mr. Griggs I have said over and over again, you have your fees and you have been asked to do certain work that you have provided. What I am saying is you have been asked to do work through Mr. Nufrio, not following Board policy. Mr. Nufrio stated you are out of order and I absolutely will not allow you to continue because you are impugning me. I always follow policy. I had to remind you guys about policy.

Mr. Monge stated you are asking Mr. Griggs to go to committee meetings that he doesn't have to go to. You asked him to write a resolution. Mr. Nufrio stated I can ask him to do that. Mr. Monge stated you cannot. If you read the Board policy – everyone please read the Board policy. It says mutual consent. Mr. Nufrio stated write to the SEC and get an answer from them. Mr. Monge stated you are wrong. Mr. Nufrio stated I am not wrong and please stop what you are saying. Dr. Francis asked does Mr. Nufrio come to you every time he goes to Griggs to do something – do you know about it? Mr. Nufrio asked how about the reverse – does he consent with me? The answer is no. Mr. Tatum stated before this thing goes way out of hand – I'm going to answer your question and the answer is no and it is no on two fronts. There are things that go on in this District and I need a legal opinion and I don't have the time to hunt down Mr. Nufrio and ask him and some of these things don't pertain to him – operations of the school district and that is one piece of it. But are there times that there are communications between the two of them, I'm sure there are and sometimes I do find out after the fact but then again, and for this point of view, I know the policy says mutual consent and if there is a situation where it is emergent and I have to contact him to find out about it; you may turn around and say to me as a Board or committee, why hasn't this been taken care of yet. I can't speak to the conversations that the two of them have but I can tell you that anything that is pertinent to the operations of this District – where a person has to be involved, I will pick up the phone and call him and so will Mr. Benaquista if he has been designated to handle the situation. There are times where I will say to him, please pick up the phone and contact Mr. Nufrio about this. Where possible, we try to maintain mutual consent. Mr. Nufrio stated if you have any complaints, the SEC will gladly take your complaint and I will gladly respond.

Do you have anything else to add about these bills? Mr. Griggs stated no, just approve the bills for the firm. Mr. Nufrio stated Mr. Tatum could we represent those bills for legal services next week. Mr. Tatum stated they will be approved tonight.

Mrs. Moses left meeting at 9:12 p.m.

Mr. Monge stated ultimately this Board is going to...Mr. Nufrio stated excuse me I'm trying to get an answer here. I'm talking with him and you jumped right in. Mr. Monge stated I will raise my hand. Mr. Nufrio stated I'm not going to recognize you because you like to talk all the time. Mr. Monge stated and you don't Mr. Nufrio. Mr. Nufrio stated I'm the President and you are not. Next year if you are re-elected you can be president. I want to see if you will say the same thing. Mr. Monge stated you love it. Mr. Nufrio stated I'm not going to debate with

you personally because you already offended me officially this evening and I will take some action on that.

Mr. Tatum stated as far as the back-up – we have to pay the bills. Mr. Nufrio stated is it in here? Mr. Griggs stated we requested that the business office put it back on the bill list.

Mr. Monge stated I asked for clarification to understand who is he doing the work for – that is the clarification I asked for. Mr. Nufrio asked did you make the motion? Mrs. Williams stated can we please move on. Mr. Nufrio stated I would love to Mrs. Williams but it is always a debate. You ask for clarification but meanwhile services were rendered and they are not paid for. Mr. Monge stated he just made a point and I'm just saying what the request was – which was to get clarifications on the bills. If everybody is o.k. with not knowing what we are getting billed for in the District...Mr. Griggs stated I resent that. If you read the bills – you ask for clarification on stuff that is pretty obvious.

Mr. Nufrio stated you need to stop making these allegations. Mr. Griggs I need you to specifically take note of all that has been said this evening. I will contact the SEC myself – I'm going on record right now.

Mr. Griggs stated they don't look like they are on here. Mr. Brennan stated they will be on next Tuesday's meeting. Mr. Nufrio stated they will be on next week because I don't believe in breach of contract.

Mr. Monge stated I believe in following policy. Mr. Nufrio stated here you go again just jumping right in like you always do. The policy is that you need to be recognized by me when you want to speak just like everyone else. Thank you and I will make an in-depth analysis of all of this and you can be sure of that.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Mrs. Higgins, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mrs. Regis-Darby,
Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Nufrio

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Dr. Francis

MOTION CARRIED

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mrs. Williams stated I would like to talk about your statement. When we had the budget hearing I asked about the positions that were going to be eliminated and it was 49 and we didn't know who they were, it was mixed. Do we know who? Do we know what teachers, custodians? Mr. Tatum stated we have two proposals that we have developed and on the advice of our counsel, that is not to be discussed this evening. Mr. Griggs stated we can discuss that in executive session (inaudible). Mr. Benaquista stated and personnel is going to have a meeting this week. Mrs. Williams stated so we can't discuss which departments are going to be affected. Do we know how it is going to affect the programs? We also said it wasn't going to affect what we had in place – can we discuss that? Mr. Tatum stated we have been doing a great deal of work daily on this. Once again we are not looking to reduce any services to students, we are looking at trying to maintain but it is the extra pieces that we are talking about if that makes any sense to you. I'll give you one example of what I mean. When we have a circumstance for

example a music teacher in every school – which gives us an overage because in prior years for example we may have had four music teachers as opposed to six – then that overage is what we are looking at in terms of reducing because there is additional time in that particular schedule and maybe we created some type of back-up program and it may not necessarily be mandated. We have found an overage in teachers and we have been creative and utilized those teachers for those purposes but those are not the things that are mandated so those are the types of things we are talking about trying to reduce but not to say that children will not have music in their classrooms. There are administrative positions that were proposed and there is money in the budget that are going to be eliminated. I think the misunderstanding was that people walked away last week that 49 positions would fill that budget gap but I also mentioned there would be cuts across the Board which means it would not only be teachers it would be other areas including custodians, administrators and that kind of thing.

Mr. Nufrio stated I apologize for not being here if you spoke about it. Mr. Tatum stated I will give you my statement. Mr. Nufrio stated that is the statement based on the agenda review meeting last Thursday. Mr. Tatum stated correct. Mr. Nufrio stated of course we spoke about it, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Brennan and yourself. You had a press release yesterday. Did anyone see it? I didn't see it directly, it was emailed to me. The press release indicated 149 I believe which you originally indicated and that was reduced to 49. Mr. Tatum stated that is where the clarification is needed – 149 teaching positions is what was proposed in the original draft of the budget to the County. I mentioned also that we received a call from the County regarding this. In so much as when I was questioned as to whether or not we would lose that many teachers, my response was and you were in the room that number is correct but I would certainly work very hard not to lose that many classroom teachers for our students because we would not be able to function if we lost that many teachers. The budget reductions have to be in other areas other than teaching. When we came up with the statement last week that 149 is down to 49 because we spread those costs to other areas so it wouldn't affect just classroom teachers.

Mr. Nufrio stated I have your press release and it says as to collaboration with building and central office administration, the originally projected number of 150 staff reductions have already been reduced by 33%. Of the remaining amount approximately 49 of those will be teachers with the rest non-instruction. If you had 150 and you reduced by 33. Mr. Tatum stated that is where we are right now that is not the total number. Mr. Nufrio stated I don't know if you constructed this, it seems a little clouded in terms of what exactly it translates to. If it has been reduced by approximately 33% and you only take 50 off – leaving 100 and then of the remaining amount 49 of that 100 are teachers. Mr. Tatum stated could be teachers. It could go lower. Mr. Nufrio stated to better understand the press release – 150 down to a 100 but 49 of those may be teachers. Mr. Tatum stated we are still working on that. Mr. Nufrio stated the rest would be other staff – non-instructional meaning it could be in the custodial department. Mr. Tatum stated that is what “across the board” means in my mind. It is more than just the classroom. It means a number of different areas that we will work at. It is not feasible to lose 150 teachers – we cannot operate that way. Mr. Nufrio stated but that was originally presented to the County. Mr. Tatum stated what went into the budget was if you eliminate 150 teachers. Mr. Brennan stated it equates to a dollar amount. Mr. Nufrio stated I guessed about \$8 million based on salaries and benefits so I said why wouldn't that have covered – if in fact it was going to stay that way that would have more than covered the deficit or almost \$9 million in total all together so that was to

present a balanced budget because they don't want to see an unbalanced budget. Mr. Tatum stated correct. Mr. Nufrio stated now we are at the point where you are working to address and reduce the number of teachers that would be rifted or eliminated. RIF doesn't really translate to elimination – it is a warning – a notice. Will you be working with the association and putting together a seniority list? Mr. Benaquista stated a seniority list comes in if there are tenure teachers. Mr. Tatum stated let's clarify something – I don't want it to be misconstrued that the association has no idea of any of this. I meet with them and I have talked with them. I want to be upfront about the fact that there will be ongoing discussions with the association about this and the bottom line is we have deficit; we want to maintain good programs for our students; we are doing everything we can do as possible – we are looking everywhere and how to reduce that number so it lessens the impact on our teaching staff and programs. I'm sorry that people want to go out and say it is only 49 people – with the budget that we have 49 does not equate to that dollar amount and that is why I wanted to clarify because some people walked away with the interpretation that satisfied what they wanted to hear but they missed the part where I said that was reduced to go across the board and include other areas of the budget and that is what that statement was all about. That is the statement I made and that is the one I will stand by

Mr. Nufrio stated the only reason why I brought up the association and the seniority list is because that is required by the State. Whenever you do a RIF those are the prerequisites and criteria that must be met. Mr. Tatum stated you don't have a RIF until you start. Non-tenured staff is not part of the RIF. Mr. Nufrio stated understood but if in fact there are tenured individuals. Mr. Tatum stated unfortunately you missed the Personnel Committee tonight and we addressed that tonight. Mr. Nufrio stated it is my fault since I was not there but you did address the fact that the people that may be on this list are non-tenured. Mr. Tatum stated the people on this list are going to be non-tenured. The first step is to place all tenured people in and then we will go to non-tenured people. Not just teachers – staff will be receiving a letter until we get to a point where we are satisfied with the budget. We will be doing other things like Title I and all different areas to try to save as many people as possible.

Mr. Nufrio stated my final point is when we passed the budget, there were Board members like myself, and I voted "abstain" – I believe two other Board members voted "no" – Mrs. Minneci was recovering from her surgery – I found myself at odds with the whole thing to be honest. In the interest of explaining why I abstained, I actually stated that there was still some questions regarding the budget, as well as Mrs. Richardson asking about the County Superintendent and I think Mrs. Williams also asked. I'm just wondering and I have done this for a long time and I experienced RIFs and layoffs as president of the association of administrators and when a budget is presented for public vote or because of the November election it becomes a Board vote, it is still dealing with public money – the tax dollars. I was very disturbed by the fact that there were some inconsistencies if that is not the right word fine – chose another but I wanted to ask Mr. Griggs, when that occurs and there are inconsistencies and vague numbers that are vague to the Board yet the boat still goes through, doesn't that somehow raise a question about vacating the boat and I know how it would have to be done but I will wait for your response.

Mr. Griggs stated if someone voted on the budget and they had a misunderstanding on what they were voting on in terms of whatever, then what could happen is the Board can take a

vote to rescind the budget vote but having said that keep in mind that the deadline for approval of the budget under statute is May 14th of this year. If for example something like that happens this evening, then there needs to be a special meeting to meet and vote on the budget and obviously would tie into additional information to Board members that would make them feel comfortable about voting on the budget so that is how the process works.

Mr. Nufrio stated a process of taking a vote but it wouldn't necessarily have to go to a special meeting and I did check that out because making a proposal to vacate and it should pass, you can still follow up with now that we have more information because you provided more clarity, better understanding of the numbers and if there are still questions I can understand that too because each one of us processes differently. A second vote can be taken with regards to the budget so that now that we do have better clarification as to what the numbers translated to we can still take a vote once again so it would be two votes – two processes that we can do without having to deal with a special meeting. Mr. Griggs stated you could. Dr. Francis asked Mr. Nufrio why are we talking about this? Mrs. Williams stated why aren't we? Mr. Nufrio stated you are out of order Dr. Francis. I will answer it after he is done. Dr. Francis stated I want to know stop this grandstanding right now. Mr. Nufrio stated you are out of order Dr. Francis. It is amazing I have to say it to certain Board members over and over again.

Mr. Griggs stated it would be my opinion – what would be more appropriate would be to have a special meeting so that you can notify the public that you are going to have a special meeting and that any additional information will be given to Board members which they will have when they vote again. I think it is a public issue as much as a Board issue to me. If there is additional information to hear about that is where I am at and I think you need a special meeting and I know what the statutory deadline is and that is the extent of what is set forth in the statute and also set forth in the calendar put out by the State Department of Education where it talks about budget approval. The approval of the levy is the approval and I think you talked about the County Office still needs to review. Mr. Tatum stated you have to because the way the budget was presented the percent was different so whatever vote you guys end up taking, at the end of the day, the number is the number and the recommendation of what we changed in the budget is going to be based upon what is good for the District. It is not going to be based upon, unfortunately one person doesn't like what is presented here, I'm going to recommend what is going to maintain a thorough and effective education in this District and that is what I'm going to recommend. If the Board desires to do that and vacate the vote and have a special meeting, we will continue to do the work that we are doing in the best interest of the District and that is the recommendation I'm going to make. Mr. Nufrio stated you did say that we could because I don't see it as an issue necessarily with the public because it is an issue of the process that the Board exacted on the 26th and that a vote to vacate and followed with a vote to once again either pass or reject the budget would not be out-of-order. Mr. Griggs stated I agree based upon a member felt they had different information now or they didn't have enough information – yes you can take the vote but I'm still holding the position that the next vote needs to be at a special meeting and it should not be done this evening – I would not do that.

Mr. Nufrio stated to answer your question Dr. Francis – I wasn't disregarding your question, it was just that you were talking out of order. When Board members have questions pertaining to a resolution and the vote proceeds – fine the five votes are respected – no question

about it but if the questions are still vague to some extent until a later time that the Superintendent provided more clarity, to me it just makes common sense that those three individuals, including myself, and Mrs. Minneci was not here and absent from the meeting, then it would just make sense to at least satisfy their curiosity as opposed to you opposing it.

Dr. Francis asked who are the Board members that didn't have the clarification and didn't know? Mr. Nufrio stated myself included. Dr. Francis stated you abstained – you were there. Mr. Nufrio stated that is the reason because there wasn't real clarity about the numbers. Dr. Francis stated why didn't you ask that question at that time. Mr. Nufrio stated we did ask. Dr. Francis stated not you, you abstained. Mr. Nufrio stated I guess you have to go to the record Dr. Francis.

Mr. Monge stated so what are the questions. Here is my recollection of the last few budgets that I have been part of and voted on and as a parent looking in and seeing the process – this is probably the most open, transparent process that we have gone through and ultimately you have the revenue that we are approving and as historically happened before we have a budget that the administration and we would entrust Mr. Tatum and the staff identifying a lot of the things that we said could be adjusted and his leadership to get us at a very good place. Maybe there are questions that weren't asked that night that you can ask now for clarification – to unwind or even the idea of unwinding this. Mr. Nufrio stated you held up paying legal fees because you had a lot of questions. Mr. Monge stated can I finish please and that is o.k. and that is professional as president of the Board to cut me off. Mr. Nufrio stated again you are doing filibuster – you should be in Washington – you would be great at it. You made your point – you want to know if we are going to ask questions. Mr. Monge stated you cut me off. Mr. Nufrio stated again you are out of order because you are filibustering. Mr. Monge stated I'm not filibustering. Mr. Nufrio stated yes you are unless you don't know the term filibustering. Mr. Monge stated you obviously don't know the term – can I please finish. Mr. Nufrio stated I don't know the term – o.k. You still don't want to recognize I am the chair; that is o.k. Mr. Monge stated if you want to cut people off all the time. Mr. Nufrio stated because you say the same thing over and over again. Mr. Monge stated if this Board believes that is o.k. and that is the proper way. Dr. Francis stated it is not o.k. Mr. Nufrio stated I would think you would say that so that is o.k. Mr. Monge stated is that o.k. to cut somebody off. Mr. Nufrio stated Mrs. Williams – I am cutting you off because you are out of order. Mr. Monge stated now I'm out of order. Mr. Griggs. Mr. Nufrio stated you are out of order again. Mr. Monge stated you cut me off, I didn't even finish my statement. Mr. Nufrio stated you are out of order; you kept saying if there is questions – I'm about to ask that. Mrs. Williams you were one of three Board members that had questions, you voted “no” on the resolution. Mrs. Williams stated I did. Mr. Nufrio asked are you at this point inclined to be more satisfied with the explanations given. Mrs. Williams stated no because I'm still concerned on who will get laid off and what people are going to be affected and how it is going to affect our kids. One of the things that I have experienced with my child has been newer younger teachers get him and my concern is maybe we are going to lose really good people and if you lose really good people and if we are in a position to bring them back, they may not want to come back because of the way everything unfolded. I am very uncomfortable with all of it and I still haven't had a lot of my questions answered.

Mr. Nufrio stated Mrs. Higgins you were the other “no” vote. I would like to ask you if at this point in time after the explanation given by the Superintendent – which by the way to reiterate what Mr. Tatum said, the number is the number, the explanation was more detailed this evening which I was not here for but I was here on Thursday with Mrs. Minneci and we got the first clarification. Excuse me – everybody likes to talk. Dr. Francis stated you talk more than anybody else. Mr. Nufrio stated I am the president unless you still don’t accept that and that is the problem Dr. Francis. You didn’t vote for me and that is fine; I still respect you. Member of the audience stated what is going on here – this is embarrassing. Mr. Nufrio stated excuse me this is not the public to be involved in. A lot of times people come to this meeting because I think they have a pre-set notion on how it is going to be conducted. I tried to in every sense of the word.

Mrs. Higgins stated I agree with Mrs. Williams but I also appreciate Mr. Tatum’s effort to reduce the number of teachers and staff and looking at every nook and cranny. The only question I think I have is when you talk about not cutting a program like music, does that mean you are increasing the class size? Mr. Tatum stated it doesn’t mean increasing the class size. Gerry there is one thing I would like you to reveal tonight because maybe this will help answer. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated can I say one thing to the clarify – there is a State mandate when it comes to the number of kids that can be in a class size so we need to do our research ourself when we sit on this Board. There is a number between K-12 – there is a number of kids that can be in a classroom.

Mr. Tatum stated can we speak about class size because I think these are things that people don’t understand about what has happened in this District over the course of the years. Gerry can you illustrate the class sizes in the elementary level. Mr. Benaquista stated we looked at elementary class sizes and there are a lot of classes at 15-16-17. We would never want to approach or go over a good number and I know some districts around us and what they are at – 28 and I don’t think that is healthy. I have my own opinion on class size. It doesn’t need to be shared but I do think 15-16-17 in a class size – we are very lucky that we are able to service our kids at those numbers for so long. At the same time rising costs are issues we have dealt with and talked about so they were shifting those costs and increasing class sizes because years ago a lot of them were at 20. We are under 20 in a lot of areas. I can give you a number – if we push class sizes between 23-24 and let you know that we are still at a comfortable class size and still under a lot of schools around us. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated and State mandates. Mr. Benaquista stated definitely under State mandate. Mr. Tatum stated we are far below that. Mr. Benaquista stated as a district when we can get two teachers in the room – when you bring that number of 20 down to 10:1 of course kids are going to gain from that. Personally I would love to keep class size under 20 but when you are dealing with a budget issue like we are which believe me I hope I never have to deal with this again – you have to think about those things. If you can save more teachers by increasing class a little bit, I still feel those teachers can service those kids. That is something that I feel has to be on the table. You can’t just come up with the \$7.5 million just anywhere. Eighty-five percent of our budget is salary and benefits so where is the biggest percentage of that money going to come from unfortunately. Mr. Tatum we have some other things – we talked about State mandates – we have a lot of things in this District that we go above State mandates in other areas that we are servicing our kids. Again these kids gain from that. Years ago we weren’t dealing with this and the budget was balanced plus we were putting

away \$6-7 million every year but unfortunately it didn't happen this year and this is what we are facing. I'm looking forward to sharing with Mr. Nufrio because he wasn't around – where we are at right now in our Personnel Committee and hopefully Mrs. Williams can join because I want input and I want to be transparent. Unfortunately at this point we can't for the best interest of the District disclose everything because we are not there yet and in my mind I haven't drained every resource before I could put a teachers name on it and I will not tell Mr. Tatum that I am done until I know and Mr. Tatum knows that I went back and I found in my mind a lot of money that offset other things. Based on our discussions as a Board, I look forward to getting more ideas from the Personnel Committee. I was still waiting on the actuals from the settlement of the UTEA to put in our system to see what was projected and what was actual and does that equate to say \$150,000 difference and where I can use that money to now say alright we have this \$150,000 where do we want to give it back. This is the last thing and I'll end here that I ever wanted to be part of but I also think I have responsibilities within this District to do what I feel is best for everyone.

Mr. Tatum stated I think we need to speak to something else. One, we sit in this room and this is the first time we ever faced a budget reduction. I can tell you about four years ago, a similar situation where you guys weren't here but I was one of the administrators at the time, I wasn't the Superintendent, there were papers all along the wall and we were trying to place people – so this is not the first time. The second thing that I need to say is we have to scrape that budget every year and what I think people are not hearing is money that we are finding now, there were many years that we have given it back and about two years ago we found \$3.7 million scraping this budget and in doing so our kindergarten assistants had been eliminated and the first thing that we did was put them back despite the fact that we don't make the class size that is mandated by the State of New Jersey – we are far below that as well. We put those folks back in place. The fact that there is a continual increase in special services and that was the issue back then unfortunately we were way over budget. As soon as we found the money we put them back in place and on top of that we gave the Business Office another \$2.0 million back and we hired one position that year because there was an issue in Union High School and we needed to include another SAC in the building and that is all we spent the entire year. That money which is called breakage a lot of times and attrition is money that I can use to put other things in place in the District but that did not happen because despite the fact of what people think, everything I have put in place in this District has been refunded money from things I have found in other places. The programs that have been put in place are from moneys that have been found in these budgets. I think what has to happen here is that you want to sit here and you want to talk about what has transpired this year, you need to start taking a closer look at the history of what has happened in this District. I have done an analysis that folks don't know about. I went to the time that we lost that \$9.1 million and we had a \$6.4 million reduction in State aid. I look at these figures. You want to know what is going on well I'll tell you tonight – you know what has happened, when the Governor came in and took all that money from this District, this District never recovered from that. You know why because there is a reoccurring gap that happens every year and you and I spoke about this. How is it that every year we start with a \$4 million gap year after year after year yet we are not over indulging, we are not over increasing, we are using found money to give programs to kids. My question is where the heck were the programs back in the days when we had all that money – when it was taken from us and that flat State aid – I can show you the State aid figure from 2009-2010 and it is almost the same figure of 2018. If

you talk about whether or not we are doing an appropriate job, we are looking at everything. It is in the interest of the children of this Town and the interest of maintaining programs. I created programs that I want to maintain. If you think Greg Tatum is having a good time and seeing what he can do to hurt children, you are barking up the wrong tree. It is a little insulting with all the hard work that we do and to sit here and to hear that people think we are trying to conceal things when unfortunately we have our own parameters that we have to face. There is work with UTEA and again I'm going to go back on the record of saying, because I pulled the record on this as well, that the Board in executive session was apprised of what was going on with this budget well before it was ever developed and I have the record in my possession and I can prove it. People will sit here tonight and say that they didn't understand and what not, but that is not true because that was done and the record will speak to it. You can say whatever you want to say about my management but we work tremendously hard to try to maintain a good system here and unfortunately spending has gotten out of control and I informed the Board where the spending was and what the budgeting practices have been over the last couple of years and I don't know if it fell on deaf ears or what happened but I can tell you this much, people that were on the Board at that time knew. I won't say anything about brand new Board members but the people that were here they knew and they were informed and it is on the record that will reflect that.

I will tell you something else – if one of the other issues that we dealt with, it came forward and what I said to a particular group of people that this year for the first time, this was months ago, you are going to see budget reductions because of some of the practices that have taken place so people were forewarned and that is what I'm going to say about this. At the end of the day we have a number, that number has to be met – I'm trying to meet that number the best way possible to maintain a good solid school district and not take away from children.

We talk about in technology – one-on-one initiative and that doesn't necessarily mean Chromebooks, it could mean moving computers to other schools. That is the delay that we are putting in place to offset some of the costs. Some of the frivolous spending that has been done over the course of last year and some of the budgeting practices that have been done and unfortunately got us into this situation. You put in the paper Greg Tatum did this but Greg Tatum is the one keeping everyone informed about the fact that these practices were going on and they weren't being done appropriately; that is the difference here. Mrs. Higgins stated I'm not pointing any fingers. Mr. Tatum stated I'm simply saying that is the perception out there and unfortunately it is a false perception and the record needs to be straight and it needs to be clarified in all due respect to you Mrs. Higgins and Mrs. Richardson, who weren't on the Board last year, that the majority of the Board were apprised of exactly what was going on and I told them well in advance of what was going to happen here if that practice did not stop.

Mr. Nufrio stated Mrs. Higgins your question was simply that and it has been answered. Mrs. Higgins stated yes. Mr. Nufrio stated Mrs. Williams I know you still have some concerns. Mrs. Williams stated I do. Mr. Nufrio stated just to stipulate as president of the Board, it is also my duty to hear the Board members if they call, email or show concern whether at a Board meeting or privately so I would be remised and simply wrong to disregard that and that is the point for bringing that up but I want to add to that. There was a process that follows so that all the Board members understand and I'm not sure if all Board members know this – I do because I

went through it several times. When a budget is defeated there are two scenarios. One if it is an April election which becomes a public vote where everyone in Town who votes has a right to cast a vote – yes or no. When that is done, it is a really difficult process – doesn't mean that you guys go back to the drawing board, it means that there is a whole process that the State requires. Now that we are in a November election, I don't believe that process applies. It goes back to the drawing board to do what you need to do. Is the question get back to the drawing board going to resolve anything more than what is currently going on in terms of making this work. We have a deficit and it is sizeable. It needs to be accounted for, addressed, worked on – rolling up sleeves, getting hands dirty and that is basically how you fix it. Is the process somewhat more mandated or more demanding rather if we don't do that, meaning in the public election, here is what occurs – the public defeats the budget, it then becomes a matter of both Town officials and the Board, they prepare their own evaluation of how to fix it. I went through it in Elizabeth. The Town makes their proposals, the Board makes their proposals – guess what – it is almost stupid because they are both sent to the State except the one that carries the most weight is the Board's proposal. Unless there are obvious violations of some kind – when I refer to the process, meaning the RIF process, that applies there too. We are not in that public vote, thank goodness because I dare say I don't know how it would turn out this year. Conceptions, misconceptions, projections and all that would have probably muddle the picture even more so. At this point in time, Mrs. Williams and I'm going to ask you directly, do you feel that a vote is required at this point or do you feel that you are pretty much are satisfied with things are being presented at least in the greater part. Mrs. Williams stated she is o.k.

Mr. Nufrio stated I rather move on Mr. Monge – if it is about this, it is just being redundant. We are moving on and there isn't going to be a resolution. Mr. Monge stated a couple of things – one is to Mr. Tatum's point. Mr. Nufrio stated we are repeating the same concept over and over. It is done, it is finished. Let's move on. Mr. Monge stated it was something that was not said and it is important. Mr. Nufrio stated by all means, enlighten us.

Mr. Monge stated through this process, and this is very important for Board members, we had a number of meetings. Mr. Brennan and Mr. Tatum have gone through this whole process – we have budget meetings and people had been invited. Also I was the only one there. Mrs. Williams stated it was 2 p.m. in the afternoon. Mr. Monge stated in other cases we did have Mrs. Richardson join us a couple of times but the point being is the feedback has always been there and if there are any questions, I have always said that and we have always talked about that and Mr. Brennan had put together a workshop – it is there. We just have to take advantage of the resources that are available to us that Mr. Tatum and his staff offer.

Mr. Nufrio stated just to comment on that and I will recall the worksession of last month and it is part of the record – we sat in this room and I asked you to give definitive numbers on where the deficit was correct. You Mr. Monge had a hard time acknowledging it. That is on the record. Now you are interrupting me. Mr. Monge stated you are attacking me. Mr. Nufrio stated it is not attacking you. Mr. Monge stated if you are going to let me speak. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated Mr. Griggs, I thought we were moving on. Mr. Griggs stated stop. Mr. Nufrio stated it's the record. You had a hard time accepting it. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I thought we were moving on – I heard that three times. Mr. Nufrio stated I didn't know that there were three other presidents here. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated listen I'm not the president, I just heard that we

were moving on. I'm going to tell you to calm down. Mr. Nufrio stated kindly respect the chair. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated calm down; watch who you are talking to and calm down. We are not on the same page; watch who you are talking to and calm down.

Mr. Griggs stated David speak. Mr. Nufrio stated Mr. Arminio you have unfinished business. Mr. Arminio stated yes, thank you. Six items – for new board members – we got the raising star nomination, if you want to you should go to the award ceremony at the Paper Mill in June. It is a tremendous show and opportunity to see our kids perform and to see how good our kids are compared to the other schools.

The National Honor Society is May 10th for those of you who are free. Senior awards are May 21st – it is nice if some of the Board members go.

Our team for the Relay for Life we are half way to our goal of \$1,000 - \$525 donated from members. We have a little time left – it is June 2nd. I hope you can spend a few minutes and come. I'm giving up almost my whole day.

We voted on it a couple of months ago, we are presenting to honor Dr. Jakobowski with the naming of the auditorium at Jefferson School on May 23rd. The plaque was purchased at no cost to the Board. Mr. Nufrio asked do you know if he is going to be there? Mr. Arminio stated yes, I talked to him already. Mr. Tatum stated he was here today in the office.

Mr. Monge stated I don't know Mr. Tatum if anything is being looked into as it pertains to the idea about Hamilton. Mr. Tatum stated Mr. Benaquista and I had a conversation about that as well and there are some things that are going as part of the budget.

Mr. Monge stated I wanted to get an update on the RFP/RFQ process. Mr. Nufrio stated there is no update as of yet. If you recall, I indicated not once but twice that I was still considering whether or not an ad hoc committee was going to be necessary given the number of responses that Mr. Brennan alluded to I asked him to submit to the Board members when he is ready and have done his review to make sure that everything is in place and we will all do this as a Board as a whole. It will not require committee work. It will probably come to the table and I have fully discussed this with Mr. Tatum, Mrs. Minneci and Mr. Brennan at the work session. We will all have in our hands the recommendations and then we will decide as a Board – each individually, we will take a vote on each and every category.

Mr. Monge stated we don't have a policy other than you selecting committee members; we don't have a process as it pertains to selecting contractors. I think a couple of years ago when we did it, we did a great job and we were able to identify good candidates and saved the District a lot of money and I wish you would have gone down that route.

Mr. Brennan does a good job as it pertains to the result on what was submitted and there was a lot of feedback. The one group, financing services, you only had three versus we had more in the past. One of the things that I requested was and I thought we talked about it at the Board meeting and I didn't know it wasn't being done is the courtesy to go out to the banks that had submitted in the past so that we would have the most competitive process possible to be able

to earn the most money for the District. I would offer consideration to the Board about putting that back out so that we can get additional responses.

The other thing I wanted to ask Mr. Griggs – so for everyone to know, I was OPRA by Steven Le – my emails and everything. Mr. Nufrio asked what does that have to do with this? Mr. Monge stated I have a question. Mr. Nufrio asked Mr. Griggs is that in order? Mr. Griggs stated he can. Mr. Monge stated he OPRA my email as it pertains to the budget and my personal written notes and also my spreadsheet. Whenever that is made available, I would like it to be public record so everyone can see it because obviously this is a nice little witch hunt that is being put out there. Happy hunting. Mr. Griggs stated to be clear it is public record – if somebody wants a copy they can just file an OPRA request. Mr. Monge stated I'm offering it up for our Board or I can get a copy and share it myself. Mr. Griggs stated I answered your question, you will receive a copy. Plus if anyone wants to OPRA the response they can do that.

Mr. Nufrio stated would you like to expound on some of the OPRA requests may not be. Mr. Griggs stated what I believe was requested if I recall was essentially spreadsheets and emails. The spreadsheets are not a government document, they are deliberative, consultative so there is nothing to release there. I have instructed Mr. Brennan to respond that way. We don't have a response on the emails yet because it is an involved process to look for the emails in any system so that is where we are right now. Jeff you will get a copy of the response and any body else that wants it.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC:

Elsie Macki stated I am here as a parent and a large majority know my passion – children with disabilities, special education because of my kid and I'm really here to talk about the previous Board meeting about the budget and the importance of this Board and Mr. Tatum, Mrs. Conti and the importance of perception. During that budget meeting it was hard to listen to it. Everybody at this table has some sort of connection with special services and children with disabilities, whether a family member, educator, physician, or you just been around it or as a parent. During that meeting it was hard and what was ironic was we had a parent meeting to talk about what special services offers and what it was and break it down so that people would have an understanding of it. Fast forward going to the budget meeting and what was tossed around and I get it and a lot of people don't understand it and as the Business Administrator you are just numbers and the Board receives what you have.

What happen was and this is not just me this is parents coming on Board – listening to teachers, they don't understand what we go through, the classroom setting and what was tossed around and the perception was that special services was responsible for this budget mess that we are in – which is not true. It is not about special services because the kids are mandated. My child has an IEP, I don't hide it and other kids have IEP's and there are services in there that districts can't offer – it would be great if we could but we can't and the State doesn't give you a lot of money to do this. It is basically talk around the district, figure it out and find the money and deal with it.

When you toss around the words special services the public doesn't understand the nature and complexity that comes with special services and it took a lot for me not to stand up there and go off but I know strategy is important because I'm always telling Mr. Tatum that you need to be a little more strategic in your approach and Mr. Nufrio, he knows. So when you toss around the word and you talk about special services, you open Pandora's Box to the ignorance of the community who don't know better. What we as parents have been dealing with is a community asking questions of why is my money being wasted on these children. These children have nothing to offer society and when you don't clarify and you have teachers that are sitting there helpless and then you have the parents sitting there torn because back in the day not so long ago, children like mine, were kept in the attic and you brought their food up to them because society didn't feel that they could do anything or they were placed in institutions. You have to do better with your communication to the community and to the public because we became on the attack and then what happened it transitioned over to the teachers because now the fear is out there. Here is what we are hearing – did you hear in Elizabeth what they did, they got rid of the one autism classroom and starting shifting things around. The non-tenured teachers that help our community, they are getting lost, the aides are going away. I'm tired of telling people don't worry about it we're mandated. I will commend Mrs. Conti and someone said to me "hell has frozen over" and we will probably disagree tomorrow but she got up there and she attempted to try to explain and everyone deflected. The passion that happened here tonight with everyone going back and forth with each other – sat here 4.5 hours – that same passion was used to offset what was created which was fear, misinformation and the stigma that our children face because why are we vested in these kids when our own Board and I always hold you responsible, you all got caught up in all of that and special services took the hit from it. No one took the time to explain, did a lot of that tonight, but in here you have educators, parents, no one defended us. Mrs. Shannon thank you – you were the only person that went up there and said special services took a beating that night and it was very hard to listen to. I am asking and I'm just letting you know because I'm very transparent with all of you, I'm coming next week, it is televised and I'm not coming alone. You have to make some sort of a statement and you have to correct a wrong because we are not to blame for this – not the kids and we should not feel like we are the pariahs because none of us had children and expected our children to be born with a disability. Nobody wants to go through that and those living our life understand this and you feel you have somebody that the children adore and I have seen her in action but that gives you a testament to what it is so you guys have to do better. We will be there next week, full blown. There needs to be some sort of statement out there and an apology in my opinion is owed to our community because it wasn't right.

Mr. Nufrio stated Mrs. Macki what was difficult to even hear is that such an individual even be discerned or projected. Mrs. Macki stated thank you because that is the argument and I try to stay away from the forum but even looking at it in the forum with that discussion out there based on perception of what they took from it. Our money is being wasted, these kids have nothing to offer – you should take care of your child – like the children don't have the basic of a life but everyone does.

Mr. Nufrio stated I think you used the right one earlier – the ignorance and maybe that is where it applies. I'm not going to try to defend myself but you have known me long enough, as

Mrs. Conti has and Mr. Tatum, I have always been the advocate for the special ed. I have always tried to support the program whatever was new or mandated. Mrs. Macki stated I have worked with all of you and I agree. Mr. Nufrio stated you are right, we should all be doing it that is a fact because it will help to dispel the ignorance and I will just leave it at that.

Ann Margaret Shannon stated page 12 – P-5 – Debbie Cyburt what is this. Mr. Brennan stated this is the Treasurer of school moneys. She prepares the Treasurer’s Report and reconciles the bank accounts. Ms. Shannon stated so it is like when we have a school treasurer in the schools. Mr. Tatum stated this is mandated by law. Mr. Brennan stated she works for the municipality.

Ms. Shannon stated whoever is going to take charge of that cafeteria school survey – find out why Union High School has better food than the other schools from what I hear.

To speak to special ed, I heard things tonight that upset me – in the classrooms we are not doing preventative strategic moves to help keep those number of referrals down. They work in those classes with the I&RS modifications day in and day out – the I&RS committees do extra work for no compensation so please don’t think and it really sounded like you guys thought that there was no preventative stuff but it is out there.

A lot of questions on the RIF, it was mentioned that you only needed a seniority list if they were tenured; however, the association wants to take care of our non-tenured so I’m hoping I can get a list of whoever is going to be RIF so I can reach out even if they are not tenured. Mr. Benaquista stated when we are ready at that point we will share. Mr. Tatum stated we will speak with you tomorrow about that. Ms. Shannon stated we have done that in the past. Mr. Benaquista stated when we have to get to that specific person. Ms. Shannon asked when are you sending out those letters? Mr. Benaquista stated we finished them today but we just want to make sure we have everything and hand delivered within the schools and with signatures. We will have to deal with people on leaves.

Ms. Shannon stated some things came to me today – have paras already been transferred from schools/classrooms. Mr. Benaquista stated it is on hold. Mr. Tatum stated we can address that issue tomorrow. Ms. Shannon stated there is one more to talk about tomorrow (inaudible) decisions that parents can make. The last thing is a personal opinion, as a taxpayer, I think this Board should hire an independent parliamentarian to sit at these meetings to move these things along.

Catherine Lewis stated I’m a teacher at Burnet Middle School. I want to thank you for all the hard work you guys are doing. It is very clear that you are all passionate in your own ways and we appreciate that. But I would also like to invite you all to come to the buildings and visit us and see us. I know Mr. Arminio and Mr. Tatum have seen me work with the students. Ms. Paul came by my room and took pictures the day of the Chromebook rollout. I was showing the kids how to make folders in their drive. My door is always open and that is not just literal it is figurative and it is for a reason because I welcome any one including other teachers that want to see what I’m doing, administration, all of you are welcome. I am in 229 at Burnet Middle School please come at any moment. I work from 8:03 until 11 with students and then from 1 to

2:34 with students and I think you should get out there and see what we are doing. Mr. Tatum stated before any Board member does that you need to call me for permission if you don't mind. Ms. Lewis stated I think that would be very nice and nobody should have any issues with that.

Steven Le stated just a few questions in regard to the budget, the layoffs and the reduction in force notices. I heard tonight that these reduction in force notices are complete and ready to be mailed out. How many reduction in force notices are going to be mailed out? Mr. Tatum stated we don't have a number. Mr. Benaquista stated no, it is a notice of non-renewal. Mr. Tatum stated it is a notice of non-renewal to all non-tenured employees. Mr. Benaquista stated I can't give you an accurate figure. Mr. Le stated what do you mean all non-tenured. Mr. Benaquista stated it means administrators, teachers, all people that are non-tenured will be receiving a notice. Mr. Griggs stated explain the process. Mr. Benaquista stated we are just sending the notices out to cover us by the 15th. I can probably give you a rough estimate. It is probably districtwide all employees – I'm guessing around 200. I think we have about 175 teachers and I also have to send out to aides. Aides are not non-tenured but after three years after the contract it says seniority so I have to let them know by the 15th that we are not technically issuing them a contract yet so that number is increasing.

The amount of letters that we are sending out is not anywhere near; we are going to have to notify them before June 30th that they are coming back because we have to issue a lot of them contracts. All those final details come after we have the final plan done.

Mr. Le stated we discussed about cuts across the board – do we mean custodians, professionals, security guards. Mr. Tatum stated I was the one who made the statement and the statement was across the board and that means all entities of the District. Mr. Le stated so including the (inaudible). Mr. Tatum stated that is exactly what I said and I said it more than one time tonight and I said it last week.

Mr. Le stated one more question with regard to the press release that you issued out and how that ties into the process that we have gone through so far. This Board had to submit a budget to the County Superintendent – can I get clarification – when that budget went to the County Superintendent was it 150 total staff positions or 150 teachers. Mr. Tatum stated 150 teachers – the word teachers was in that budget – correct Mr. Brennan. The bottom line was that number was designed to come up with a number that facilitated the budget being balanced. I said this last week and I will say it again. When the County Superintendent called my office, the one thing I said to them was that the number may be real but I'm going to work really hard to ensure that we don't lose that number of teachers – because that is impossible.

Mr. Le stated I asked that question just because in your press release it says that the originally projected number of approximately 150 staff reductions. Mr. Tatum stated it is a synonymous word – staff reduction and a teacher – they are all staff. Mr. Le stated but you include here reduced by approximately 33% so that means down to 100, the remaining amount approximately 49 will be teachers but the rest non-instructional. Mr. Tatum stated that is where we are right now and that was an update.

Mr. Le stated this statement says 150 staff reduction which includes teachers and other non-instructional staff. The budget that is submitted to the County is at 150 teachers or does that include an additional number. Mr. Benaquista stated the budget to the County is a dollar amount that we have to come in at. When we are looking at the budget, that dollar amount equates to so many positions. I believe but I don't want to be quoted on this but I believe the 7.5 came out after the other reductions which was outside of – we were down to 7.5 to try to figure out with personnel. The number was higher than 7.5 originally. Mr. Brennan stated that was a projected budget, they were not real numbers. Mr. Tatum stated it wasn't what was submitted to the County. The budget that was submitted to the County reflects the number of 7.5.

Mr. Le stated in terms of the number of teaching positions it equates to 150. Mr. Tatum stated the dollar amount I believe and Greg you can clarify this, when the budget was submitted it equated to 150 teachers and I believe it was salary and benefits. Mr. Brennan stated right.

Mr. Le asked how much does it equate then because now you are going to RIF non-instructional staff? How many non-instructional staff? Mr. Tatum stated do you understand that is what is in process right now and that is something that the attorney made clear that we are not able to comment on tonight because what I think you are trying to do is you are trying to probe out information that we are not allowed to give out right now and I'm not going to respond any further.

Mr. Le stated I think my questions are quite valid to ask. Mr. Tatum stated the rule is that the Board can either choose to respond or not to respond. I chose not to respond and at this point not to respond to that because it is a work in progress and you have heard that over and over again tonight and you heard me clarify that for the Board but I think you want to continue to probe to take this somewhere else and we are not going there tonight. I'm done.

Mr. Le stated (inaudible) there is a lot – knowing it is just a question (inaudible). Mr. Tatum stated we are trying to answer the questions and you know at the end of the day you have your own agenda and we are not going to deal with that because I'm not going to feed into that nonsense because that is what it is. Mr. Le stated this whole District is in a mess right now. Mr. Tatum stated you want to start calling names and name calling – remember that you were part of the mess that this school district is in. Remember the last time you were on this Board Mr. Le – if you are going to call names and you are going to start saying things about what we have done; talk about you on record too because you were part of this and I am going to ask you a question now – so if you are going to go in that direction – you want to give us back the money that you took from us when you took us to court and you tried to shut our schools down at the beginning of the school year for no reason. Do you want to give us that money back? I can bring back a paraprofessional with the money that you cost us. Mr. Le stated that is a farce. Mr. Tatum stated it is not a farce, it is true, the record will speak to it. Mr. Le stated that is a farce. Mr. Tatum stated that is not a farce.

Mr. Nufrio stated can we not turn this into. Mr. Tatum stated ask him not to do that Mr. Nufrio because you know what this is about. Mr. Nufrio stated I don't know what it is about. Mr. Tatum stated I think you do. Mr. Nufrio you have been around long enough. Mr. Nufrio stated the point is there is a question that was asked, you answered it and that is all it requires. It

doesn't necessarily have to go back and forth. Mr. Tatum stated the public needs to understand that they can't continue to probe when our rule is that we do not have to comment and then he starts making up things about the condition of the school district and I am telling you that I take offense to that because there is a gentleman that sat on this Board twice who is a part of what happened in this school district. Mr. Nufrio stated that is understood. I just didn't want this thing to get out-of-order. Mr. Tatum stated let's talk about the reduction in surplus that we have now – which was two years ago – do you remember who was on the Finance Committee on the Board at that time – so let's not talk about that. Let's not if you live in a glass house throw stones. Mr. Nufrio stated I'm really trying to get some decorum which seems to be missing quite a bit. Mr. Tatum stated the games need to stop.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mrs. Regis-Darby, seconded by Mr. Arminio, that the meeting be adjourned at 10:40 p.m.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Nufrio

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

GREGORY E. BRENNAN
BOARD SECRETARY

