

**BERKELEY HEIGHTS BOARD OF EDUCATION
BUDGET HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
MARCH 27, 2006**

CALL TO ORDER

The Budget Hearing and Regular Meeting of the Berkeley Heights Board of Education was called to order on Monday, March 27, 2006 in the Clausen Administrative Complex by the Board President, Mrs. Kirsch.

ROLL CALL

A roll call indicated the presence of the following members:

Mrs. Kirsch, Mr. Beisser, Mr. Lisk, Mr. Sincaglia, Mr. Smalley, Dr. Crisonino, Mr. Reinstein and Mrs. Schaumberg. Also present were Mrs. Rattner, Dr. Jennings and Mr. Kistner.

STATEMENT

Mrs. Kirsch read the following statement:

On April 28, 2005, this body by resolution adopted a schedule of meetings. The time, date and location of this meeting were accurately set forth therein.

On April 29, 2005, a copy of said schedule was posted at the Town Hall, the Public Library, the railroad station and the Administration Building. On the same date a copy was mailed to the Dispatch, Independent Press, Courier News, all PTA Presidents and delivered to the BHEA President, all schools and filed with the Municipal Clerk. The meeting was also announced on the District Sign at Columbia Middle School.

RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. It was moved by Dr. Crisonino and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel and legal matters. The minutes of said discussion will be made public if and when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

Motion carried.

The meeting was recessed at 7:03 p.m.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

A. It was moved by Mr. Beisser and seconded by Mr. Lisk that the Board of Education return to Public Session. Motion carried.

The meeting was reconvened at 8:00 p.m. in the Columbia School Cafetorium.

FLAG SALUTE

Mrs. Kirsch led the Board and the public in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mrs. Kirsch asked that the order of the agenda be modified this evening and requested that the Board move to the Superintendent's Report.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mrs. Rattner advised that the award winning Governor Livingston Highlander Marching Band was in attendance and would be entertaining us this evening. After the Band performed a number of selections, Mrs. Rattner expressed her thanks to all of the members and congratulated them for being recognized as the 2005 Atlantic Coast Champions. She also thanked the Band Director, Dan Kopcha, and the parents of the students for all their hard work and dedication to the program. The Drum Major and Color Guard Captains were presented with a Board Resolution by Mrs. Kirsch.

Mrs. Kirsch read the following resolution honoring the achievements of the Governor Livingston Highlander Marching Band.

WHEREAS, the Highlander Band of Governor Livingston High School in Berkeley Heights, New Jersey has received a near-perfect score of 97.45 percent out of a possible 100; and,

WHEREAS, the Highlander Band under the direction of Daniel Kopcha for the last thirty-five years, has won the 2005 Atlantic Coast Championship – Group I; and,

WHEREAS, the Highlander Band was also recently awarded the Best Overall Visual and Best Music for their performance in the Tournament of Bands; and

WHEREAS, the Highlander Band has also won the Tournament of Bands – Chapter X – Championship for the twenty-second consecutive time; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Highlander Band of Governor Livingston High School are applauded for their excellence; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Berkeley Heights Board of Education hereby recognizes the Highlander Band membership and their directors for their hard work, dedication and contributions to the Berkeley Heights Public Schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Berkeley Heights Board of Education wishes the Highlander Band much success in all of its future endeavors.

Signed and sealed this the twenty-seventh of March, of the year Two-Thousand Six.

Helen E. Kirsch, President

Judith A. Rattner, Superintendent of Schools

PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED 2006-2007 BUDGET

Mrs. Rattner, Dr. Jennings and Mr. Kistner, along with the Board Finance Committee presented the 2006-2007 School District Budget.

Items presented/discussed included:

- Enrollments – History and Projections
- Anticipated Revenues
- Appropriations
- Proposed Curriculum Highlights
- Staffing Changes
- Current year to next year revenue and appropriation comparisons
- Tax Levy Implications – Regular & Debt Service State Aid Dollars
- Ballot Question – To be voted on – April 18, 2006
- Polls are open 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Mr. Beisser commented on the proposed class size policy and its potential budgetary implications. He stressed that the policy was a guideline and class size changes and staffing decisions would always be considered on a case by case basis.

CITIZENS HEARING FOR BUDGET QUESTIONS

It was moved by Mr. Beisser and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Citizens Hearing for the 2006-2007 Budget Questions be open to the public. Motion carried.

Five citizens addressed the Board with questions on the proposed budget. Their questions included comments & concerns related to the following matters:

- Debt service state aid amounts
- Enrollment projections
- Building and grounds projects
- State aid given to other districts
- Location of publicly advertised budget
- Calculation methodology used for the enrollment SGLA
- Budgeted instructional appropriation increases
- Staff contributions to offset health premium costs
- Capital outlay projects
- Overall district budgetary process
- Requested budget items that are not being funded
- Staffing salary increases
- Historical accuracy of staffing projections

Mrs. Rattner, Mr. Kistner and Board members responded to all questions posed.

It was moved by Dr. Crisonino and seconded by Mr. Lisk that the Citizens Hearing for Budget Questions be closed. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Rattner reported that there were two letters from township parents that were received since the last meeting. These letters expressed opinions on the new class size policy that the board will consider this evening. Copies of the letters were distributed to all board members.

REPORT OF THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Jessica Goldstein and Chris Chan reported on the following topics:

Last week's performance of "Anything Goes"

Upcoming Prom Fashion Show

County teen art competition

Literary magazine submissions

Class Clash lunchroom and gym activities

Mrs. Rattner then recognized Ms. Goldstein as the winner of a national essay submission competition. Ms. Goldstein will make a guest appearance on an upcoming Oprah Winfrey Show.

ADOPT PROPOSED 2006-2007 BUDGET

Mr. Kistner noted a change to be made to motion A, the inclusion of motion E and the modification to motion F since the Tentative Budget approval at the meeting of March 13.

- A. ADOPTION OF PROPOSED 2006-2007 BUDGET** It was moved as modified by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education adopt the 2006-2007 school district budget in the total amount of \$41,890,827, (General Fund Revenues of \$39,131,506, Special Revenue Fund Revenues of \$455,294, Debt Service Revenues of \$2,304,027) including a current fund tax levy of \$32,330,646 and a debt service tax levy of \$1,600,133. It is further recommended that the Superintendent and School Business Administrator submit the current fund tax levy of \$32,330,646 to the registered voters of the Township of Berkeley Heights for their approval on April 18, 2006. A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.
- B. APPROVAL OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STATUTORY GROWTH LIMITATION ADJUSTMENT** It was moved as modified by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education approve the filing of a Statutory Growth Limitation Adjustment for Special Education Costs in the amount of \$75,495 in conjunction with the filing of the proposed 2006-2007 budget. A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

- C. APPROVAL OF CAPITAL OUTLAY STATUTORY GROWTH LIMITATION ADJUSTMENT** It was moved as modified by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education approve the filing of a Statutory Growth Limitation Adjustment for Capital Outlay Expenditures in the amount of \$321,102 in conjunction with the filing of the proposed 2006-2007 budget. A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.
- D. APPROVAL OF ENROLLMENT GROWTH STATUTORY GROWTH LIMITATION ADJUSTMENT** It was moved as modified by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education approve the filing of a Statutory Growth Limitation Adjustment for Enrollment Growth in the amount of \$55,197 in conjunction with the filing of the proposed 2006-2007 budget. A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.
- E. APPROVAL OF TRANSPORTATION GROWTH STATUTORY GROWTH LIMITATION ADJUSTMENT** It was moved as modified by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education approve the filing of a Statutory Growth Limitation Adjustment for Transportation Growth in the amount of \$2,499 in conjunction with the filing of the proposed 2006-2007 budget. A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.
- F. APPROVAL OF COMMISSIONER STATUTORY GROWTH LIMITATION ADJUSTMENT** It was moved as modified by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education approve the use of the Commissioner Spending Growth Limitation Adjustment for the Increase in Insurance and Domestic Security Preparedness in the amount of \$321,172 in conjunction with the filing of the proposed 2006-2007 budget. A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

Mr. Lisk, Finance Committee Chairperson thanked the members of his committee (Mr. Sincaglia and Mr. Smalley) and the administration for their efforts.

LIAISON REPORTS

Mrs. Kirsch reported on her attendance at the Union County Educational Services Commission meeting.

Mr. Smalley reported on his attendance at the Berkeley Heights Township Committee Meeting.

Mr. Smalley reminded everyone about the Berkeley Heights Education Foundation basketball game on Wednesday evening at Governor Livingston beginning at 7:00 p.m.

PRELIMINARY CITIZENS HEARING

It was moved by Mr. Beisser and seconded by Mr. Reinstein that the meeting be opened for the Preliminary Citizens Hearing. Motion was approved.

Two citizens addressed the Board and expressed their opinions relative to the proposed (on this evening's agenda) new Class Size Policy.

Discussions involving the citizens and Board members took place with respect to educational research and the proposed Class Size Policy. The potential implications and benefits of the new policy were discussed.

It was moved by Mr. Beisser and seconded by Mr. Reinstein that the Preliminary Citizens Hearing be closed. Motion was approved.

ADMINISTRATION

- A. POLICIES/REGULATIONS** It was moved by Mr. Smalley and seconded by Dr. Crisonino that the Board of Education approve the recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools for the following revised policy after this second reading:

Class Size 2312 (see attached)

A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

EDUCATION

- A. APPROVE SPECIAL EDUCATION SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT** It was moved by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education approve the recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools for the special education settlement agreement (Attachment A). This agreement has been reviewed and recommended for approval by Dr. Diane Janson, Director of Student Personnel Services, and district counsel. A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.
- B. APPROVE RESOLUTION** It was moved by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education approve the recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools for the Resolution honoring the Highlander Band of Governor Livingston High School (Attachment B). A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

PERSONNEL

- A. SUBSTITUTE PERSONNEL** It was moved by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education approve the recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools for the employment of the substitute/supplemental personnel listed below for the 2005-2006 school year:

<u>Teacher</u> Sheppard, Scott Berkeley Heights, NJ	<u>Home Instructors</u> Esh, Melissa (eff. 3/13/06) Madison, NJ
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<u>Classroom/Special Education Teacher Aide</u> Cray, Cynthia (eff. 3/20/06) Berkeley Heights, NJ	Tonto, Joan (eff. 3/13/06) Berkeley Heights, NJ
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Lunchroom/Playground Teacher Aide
Cray, Cynthia (eff. 3/20/06)
Berkeley Heights, NJ

A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

- B. EXTRA TEACHING PERIOD ASSIGNMENT** It was moved by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Smalley that the Board of Education approve the recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools for employment of the following Columbia Middle School personnel to teach an additional class, beyond his normal teaching schedule, during the 2005-2006 school year:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Course</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Payment in Addition To Regular Salary</u>
Michael Roof	Communication Arts	Full year/5 days	\$7,601.00 (prorated from 3/27/06 to 6/30/06)

Explanatory Note: Mr. Roof was appointed by the Board on March 13, 2006, as a substitute/replacement teacher for a staff member is out on a maternity/disability leave of absence. The staff member who is out on leave was teaching an additional class beyond a normal teaching schedule.

A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

- C. RESIGNATION OF MELISSA ESH** It was moved by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Smalley that the Board of Education approve the recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools to accept, with regret, the resignation of Melissa Esh from her teaching position in the Berkeley Heights Public Schools, effective June 30, 2006. A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

D. LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR NANCY EITNER It was moved by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Smalley that the Board of Education approve the recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools to grant Nancy Eitner an unpaid leave of absence in accordance with the Federal Family Medical Leave Act from March 24, 2006, through May 7, 2006. It is anticipated that Mrs. Eitner will return to her position in the Berkeley Heights Public Schools on or about May 8, 2006. Mrs. Eitner is a Secretary in the district's Department of Special Services. A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

E. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES It was moved by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Smalley that the Board of Education approve the recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools for the extra-curricular activities, staff members, assignments and stipends for the 2005-2006 school year, as listed below:

<u>Governor Livingston High School</u>		<u>2005-2006</u>
<u>Activity/Position</u>	<u>Instructor/Supervisor</u>	<u>Stipend</u>
Assistant Baseball Coach	Ralph Yezza	Volunteer
Assistant Track Coach (Boys)	William Stolting	Volunteer

A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

BUSINESS

A. ADOPT RESOLUTION FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES It was moved by Mr. Beisser and seconded by Mr. Lisk that the Board of Education approve the recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Heights School District policies (Administrative Benefits - #1440, Job Expenses – Teaching Staff #3440, and Job Expenses – Support Staff #4440) and NJAC 6A:23B-1.2 (b) provides that the Board of Education shall establish in the annual school budget a maximum expenditure amount that may be allocated for such travel and expense reimbursement for the 2006-2007 school year;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Berkeley Heights Board of Education hereby establishes the school district travel maximum for the 2006-2007 school year at the sum of \$48,000, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the School Business Administrator shall track and record these costs to insure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.

A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

B. ACCEPT DONATION It was moved by Mr. Beisser and seconded by Mr. Lisk that the Board of Education accept the donation of a Hewlett Packard Deskjet 712 printer from Ms. Kirsten Swanson, Teacher at Hamilton Terrace School. Should this donation be accepted, the printer is to be used in Room 101 at Governor Livingston High School. A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

- C. AWARD CONTRACT FOR COLUMBIA MIDDLE SCHOOL A/C PROJECT** It was moved by Mr. Beisser and seconded by Mr. Lisk that the Board of Education award the contract (subject to final attorney review) to Liberty Mechanical Contractors, Inc., Newark, New Jersey, in the amount of \$93,500. See enclosed bid tabulation sheet and architect's recommendation. A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

FINANCE

- A. CERTIFICATION** It was moved by Mr. Smalley and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education accept the Board Secretary's Certification as of February 2006 that no budgetary line item account has obligations and payments which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the district Board of Education pursuant to N.J.S.A. A:22-8.1. A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.
- B. MONTHLY REPORTS** It was moved by Mr. Smalley and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education accept the monthly reports of the Board Secretary for February 2006, including the monthly and Year To Date transfer report, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:20:2.13 and further, the Board certifies that after review of the Secretary's Financial Reports and certification statement that to the best of its knowledge no major account or fund has been over-expended and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year and further, accept the Treasurer of School Monies Report for January 2006.

Explanatory Note: The Year To Date cumulative report indicates that total transfers from any major budgetary line do not exceed 10% for the 2005-2006 school year.

A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

- C. **PAYMENT OF BILLS** It was moved by Mr. Smalley and seconded by Mr. Sincaglia that the Board of Education approve for payment the bills as listed below:

2/22/06 Accounts Payable	\$ 22,500.00
2/28/06 Payroll	1,202,117.76
3/7/06 Accounts Payable	61,185.88
3/15/06 Payroll	1,590,442.53
3/17/06 Accounts Payable	2,390.00
3/27/06 Accounts Payable	<u>993,453.86</u>
Total	\$3,872,090.03

A roll call vote indicated unanimous approval.

FISCAL AGENT

Motion A was withdrawn and held until a future meeting.

- A. **APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF UCRHSD UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION TRUST FUND LIQUID ASSETS** It is recommended that, as per the governing rules of the Commissioner of Education and mandated by the Supreme Court in 2001, the full value of the Unemployment Compensation fund (estimated balance \$640,000) from the former Union County Regional High School District #1 be distributed to the following constituent districts: Kenilworth 16.05%, Springfield 23.46%, Clark 27.16% and Berkeley Heights 33.33%.

Explanatory Note: As per the recommendation and advice of counsel, a copy of the attached letter will be sent to all six (including Garwood and Mountainside) former UCRHSD constituent districts (Attachment C).

FINAL CITIZENS HEARING

It was moved by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Smalley that the meeting be opened for the Final Citizens Hearing. Motion was approved.

No one wished to address the Board at this time.

It was moved by Mr. Beisser and seconded by Mr. Reinstein that the Final Citizens Hearing be closed. Motion was approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Rattner advised that there will be additional budget presentations before the vote on April 18, 2006. Upcoming presentations are scheduled to be made to the Hamilton Terrace PTO at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 28; Woodruff PTO at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4; Columbia PTO at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 5; and one final presentation to be made on Thursday, April 6 at the Hamilton Terrace Media Center at 10:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Lisk and seconded by Mr. Reinstein that the meeting be adjourned.

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael T. Kistner
Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary