

The Annual Organization meeting of the Board of Education of the City of Vineland was held in the Board Room, 625 Plum Street, Vineland New Jersey, on Wednesday, January 2, 2013 at 6:31 p.m.

Flag Salute:

Temporary Chairman: Dr. Gruccio, serving as temporary chairperson, announced that in compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law commonly referred to as "The Sunshine Law," the Vineland Board of Education has caused notice of and posting of this Annual Organization meeting of the Board of Education to be sent to the following, announcing time and place thereof, agenda, etc.: *Daily Journal*, *Atlantic City Press*, Clerk-City of Vineland and Administrative Office Public Bulletin Board.

Members Sworn In: Mr. DeSanto administered the Oath of Office to Frank DiGiorgio, Christopher Jennings and Susanne Morello who took their seats on the Board for a term of three years.

Roll Call: The following members were present: Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. English, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Medio, Mr. Mercado, Ms. Morello, Dr. Mounier, Ms. Rios and Mr. Ulrich.

Mr. DeSanto reviewed the procedure for the election of Board President. He said Dr. Gruccio will entertain nominations for the office of President. A nomination will be made from the floor and no second is necessary. Mr. DeSanto said if more than one person is nominated Dr. Gruccio will take a vote on the first nominee. In the event that the first nominee receives five or more votes that nominee becomes President. If the nominee does not receive five or more votes the next nominee is voted on.

Dr. Gruccio called for nominations for the office of President of the Board.

President: Dr. Mounier nominated Mr. Medio for President of the Board.

Mr. English nominated Mr. Ulrich for President of the Board.

There were no other nominations for President of the Board.

Dr. Gruccio closed nominations for President of the Board and asked for a vote to be taken for the first nominee, Mr. Medio.

All Members voted "yes" for Dr. Mounier's nomination of Mr. Medio for President of the Board of Education except Mr. English and Mr. Ulrich who voted "no."

Mr. Medio won the nomination of President of the Board of Education.

Mr. Medio requested nominations for Vice-President of the Board of Education.

Vice President:

Dr. Mounier nominated Susanne Morello for Vice-President of the Board of Education.

Mr. Ulrich nominated Diamaris Rios for Vice-President of the Board of Education.

There were no other nominations for Vice-President of the Board.

Mr. Medio closed nominations for Vice-President of the Board and asked for a vote to be taken for the first nominee, Ms. Morello.

All Members voted “yes” for Dr. Mounier’s nomination of Susanne Morello for Vice President of the Board of Education except Mr. English, Ms. Rios, Mr. Ulrich and Mr. Mercado who voted “no.”

Ms. Morello won the nomination for Vice-President of the Board of Education.

Public Comments:

None.

Recommendations:

Public Comments: None.

Board Member
Comments:

Mr. English welcomed Mr. Jennings and Ms. Morello to the board. He thanked Ms. Rios and Mr. Ulrich for their service the past year and a half. Mr. English wished everyone good luck in their new positions.

Mr. Ulrich congratulated the newly elected board members. He thanked Ms. Rios for assuming the role of President this summer for him while he was away. Mr. Ulrich feels the board as a whole has done a disservice by removing Ms. Rios from a leadership position in the community.

Mr. Mercado welcomed the newly elected board members. He thanked Mr. Ulrich and Ms. Rios for their service. Mr. Mercado said he looks forward to working with the new officers. He wished everyone a happy new year.

Mr. DiGiorgio thanked his fellow board members for their service to the district. He welcomed the new board members and looks forward to working with them. Mr. DiGiorgio thanked Mr. Ulrich and Ms. Rios for their service to the community and district. He said the first week of his first term he was hit with some difficult news and learned that his father was ill. Mr. DiGiorgio said he lost his father later that year, which was the most difficult time in his life. He said it is natural for him to over analyze situations and also natural when to know to take on certain roles. Mr. DiGiorgio said he enjoys contributing as a team member. He said in making his decision on whom to support for officer of the board he considered much information and his decision was based on what was best for this district. Mr. DiGiorgio said his decision was not based on the prestige that an officer title holds, political gains, to promote anyone's agenda or future political aspirations. He said his decision was ultimately what he thought was best to promote the interest of our students and the benefit of our entire community for all of our collective futures. Mr. DiGiorgio said he can honestly say any member that is sitting up here will promote what is best for the students of this community. He said being a board member allows you to continue to represent the students, community, and tax payers. Mr. DiGiorgio said our collective vision should be to create the best environment in our schools and to deliver the best educational experience for growth and personal development of our staff and students. He said there is no challenge that we cannot overcome if we can work together. Mr. DiGiorgio said the Vineland Board of Education has been criticized for micro-managing and been called dysfunctional, which he disagrees. He said not making it to an officer position on this board is not necessarily a loss of power for someone and should not be viewed as such.

Mr. DiGiorgio said he considers officer positions to be figure head roles. He said during his tenure the vote of a non-officer board member carries the same weight. Mr. DiGiorgio said we represent the entire community as a board not as individuals. He wished everyone a happy new year.

Dr. Mounier congratulated the newly elected board members along with the new officers. He thanked the outgoing officers. Dr. Mounier said it has been his belief that the Board of Education should be the furthest thing from politics. His view is that our statements and votes are not based upon personalities or whom we favor from a personal or political standpoint. Dr. Mounier said that he does not want anyone to feel that his or any board members vote is based in any way toward opinions of people in this district.

Ms. Morello thanked the people in the City of Vineland who voted her into this position. She said that she is very anxious to get started and she is only one of nine. Ms. Morello said we only function as well as all nine of us does together. She thanked everyone for their support and hopes that she earns it. Mrs. Morello said that she is looking forward to working hard and supporting the students and the hardworking staff in this city.

Mr. Jennings thanked everyone for the welcome. He said as Ms. Morello stated he is one of nine also. Mr. Jennings said he is here to work with people and come to quick and decisive agreements on issues. He thanked everyone for voting for him and hopes he does what everyone wants him to do.

Ms. Rios congratulated the newly elected officers. She thanked everyone who supported her as Vice President of the school board. Ms. Rios also thanked the community for continually supporting her in all of her endeavors. She said people always say that being a board member is a thankless job, which she never believed. Ms. Rios said it is not a thankless job and we are all leaders whether we have titles or not. She said at the end of the day we have to do what is best for our students and provide our staff the best help that they need in order to make this a successful district. Ms. Rios said while we are in the elected position we have to continue to struggle to help our people so they can grow.

Board President
Comments:

Mr. Medio congratulated Mr. Jennings, Ms. Morello and Mr. DiGiorgio on their election to the board. He thanked Mr. Ulrich and Ms. Rios for the time they served as officers and for the excellent job they did. Mr. Medio thanked the board members for electing him President and hopes he can live up to their expectations.

Mr. Medio said that he has received several complaints from the public about the 6:30 p.m. board meeting starting time. He said on more than one occasion the board recessed into closed session and left the public hanging for up to an hour, hour and a half. Mr. Medio said that he would like to do something to improve on that. Mr. Medio explained that the reason the policies and procedures were approved for three months is because it took us a year and a half to get the school uniforms to the point it is now. He said we are still not certain that school uniforms will be implemented in September. Mr. Medio said the policies need to be looked at and streamlined to some degree. He said the budget will be the first challenge the board will look at, which will take a large amount of time over the next couple of months. Mr. Medio thanked everyone.

The meeting adjourned by voice vote at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cherie Ludy
Board Secretary

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