

The special meeting of the Board of Education of the City of Vineland was held Wednesday, March 15, 2017 at 6:02 p.m. in the Reber Administration Building, Board Room, 625 Plum Street, Vineland, New Jersey, pursuant to notice with Mr. Jennings presiding and the following members present: Ms. Acosta, Mr. Bordley (through phone), Ms. Codispoti, Mr. Fiocchi, Mr. Medio, Ms. Rios and Mr. Sbrana (through phone). Absent: Mr. Pagano.

Also present: Mr. Frangipani, Acting Superintendent, Mr. Frey, Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. Haley, Board Secretary and Mr. DeSanto, Board Solicitor. Absent: Dr. Gruccio due to a medical leave.

Mr. Jennings announced that in compliance with the New Jersey meeting law commonly referred to as "The Sunshine Law," the Vineland Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be sent to the following, announcing time and place thereof, agenda, etc.: The Daily Journal, the Atlantic City Press, Clerk - City of Vineland, and Administrative Office Public Bulletin Board.

Flag Salute:

Public Comments  
on Agenda Items &  
VHS-N Building  
Dedication:

Brian DeWinne

Mr. DeWinne spoke in support of naming the VHS North Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

William D. Horton

Dr. Horton spoke in support of naming the VHS North Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Joseph C. Martino

Mr. Martino said it is quite an honor that his father, Vincent Martino, was nominated for the VHS North School dedication. He said on the behalf of the Martino family he wanted to personally thank the people who nominated his father. Mr. Martino expressed his gratitude to the Vineland Board of Education for the generous consideration. He provided a brief summary of his father's accomplishments.

Elaine Greenberg

Ms. Greenberg thanked everyone who submitted names for the dedication and Mr. DeWinne for his efforts. She said there is no other reference made in the history of the school district where a teacher gave up their life for a student. Ms. Greenberg said today she received word that the Landis Building will not be demolished regardless of what happens to it.

Ms. Greenberg asked the Board if they would consider not moving the offices out of the Reber building to Landis School. Ms. Greenberg said maybe the Landis building can be used in another way.

Ella Boykin

Ms. Boykin spoke in support of naming the VHS North Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Thomas P. McCann

Dr. McCann spoke in support of naming the VHS North Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Celeste Olivo

Miss Olivo spoke in support of naming the VHS North Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Lennasia Ross

Miss Ross spoke in support of naming the VHS N Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Emily Munoz

Miss Munoz spoke in support of naming the VHS N Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Celeste Olivo

Miss Olivo spoke on behalf of Sage Echevaria in support of naming the VHS N Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Gisellyn Miranda

Miss Miranda spoke in support of naming the VHS N Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Jordan Martinez

Miss Martinez spoke in support of naming the VHS N Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Tess Fisher

Miss Fisher spoke on behalf of the Vineland High School Historical Committee in support of naming the VHS N Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Jeff Martine

Mr. Martine spoke in support of naming the VHS N Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Ventrelle Smith

Mr. Smith spoke in support of naming the VHS N Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Robert Novicke

Mr. Novicke expressed his concern in regards to a possible 4% tax increase in the school district budget.

Scott English

Mr. English commended the people who came out this evening to speak. He spoke in support of naming the VHS N Building in honor of Dennis Tanner. Mr. English feels the Landis School issue needs to be revisited because he always envisioned Landis School as a museum.

Vicky Miller

Ms. Miller spoke in support of naming the VHS N Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Richard Lindsey

Mr. Lindsey spoke in support of naming the VHS N Building in honor of Dennis Tanner.

Mr. Jennings said we are going to take the Dedication of the VHS North Building in honor of an individual first and then work on the budget.

Mr. Jennings said the four names that were nominated are Dennis Tanner, Vincent P. Martino, Sgt. Dominick M. Pilla and Philip L. Lipman. He asked for a motion to dedicate the Vineland High School North building in honor of one of the nominees. He said the motion should state the name of the individual you are proposing.

Mr. Medio said if Dennis Tanner's name is recommended he will be voting "yes" on it. He said the opportunity to do something like this does not come along every day. Mr. Medio said he does not know if anyone knows who Dominick Pilla is. He said Sgt. Pilla was one of the soldiers killed in Mogadishu in Blackhawk Down, which is a nationally known incident. Mr. Medio said when you talk about a hometown hero Sgt. Pilla is at the top of the list.

Proposed Item

By Board Member: Dedication of the Vineland High School North Building in honor of an individual meeting the qualifications of Policy #7250.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Medio to name the VHS North building after Sgt. Dominick Pilla and Dennis Tanner, which would be the Pilla/Tanner building or Tanner/Pilla building. There was no second the motion did not carry.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Bordley, seconded by Mr. Fiocchi, to name the VHS North building after Dennis Tanner. All Members voted “yes.” **DUE TO MR. BORDLEY’S DISQUALIFICATION, HIS VOTE IS VOIDED AND MOTION PASSED 7-0 BY ACCLAMATION.**

Ms. Rios thanked everyone who came out tonight to speak on behalf of their hero. She said they are all incredible human beings and we have to choose one. Ms. Rios said there are other schools that have not been named yet.

Ms. Codispoti echoed the comments made by Ms. Rios and thanked everyone who came out tonight to offer their thoughts. She said all the nominees are well deserving.

Mr. Jennings said each of these individuals are deserving and to put a price on their lives is hard to do. He said Mr. Tanner was his Vice Principal when he was in school and thinks his name is the appropriate name. Mr. Jennings said we have more developments coming up that may be for the other nominees.

Ms. Acosta echoed the comments made by her fellow Board members. She said Mr. Tanner was her Vice Principal. The student he gave his life for was one of the most intelligent students she has ever met and to hear he is a doctor does not surprise her. Ms. Acosta said she can honestly say that she knew a hero and that was Mr. Tanner. She cannot think of a more deserving name for the building. Ms. Acosta said it is with great pleasure and honor to vote “yes” for Dennis Tanner.

Mr. Sbrana said he heard Mr. Medio’s recommendation but could not get through the phone line. He said both of these men are worthy of recognition and he votes “yes.”

Mr. DeWinne asked the Board if a time could be given to have a nice dedication to honor Mr. Tanner perhaps at the beginning of the next school year.

A recess was taken at 7:14 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 7:28 p.m.

Mr. Jennings said we are going to move on to the budget proposal.

Recommendations:

JENNINGS	BORDLEY	ACOSTA	CODISPOTI	FIOCHI	MEDIO	PAGANO	RIOS	SBRANA
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RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

The Board approve the following items regarding the 2017-2018 district budget:

- a. Approval of the 2017-2018 school district preliminary budget for submission to the State of New Jersey, Department of Education, as follows:

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Local Tax Levy</u>
General	\$171,933,353	\$23,287,671
Special Revenue	24,657,696	n/a
Debt Service	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$196,591,049</b>	<b>\$23,287,671</b>

- b. Approval of the Local Tax Levy in the amount of \$23,287,671 which includes the use of \$226,094 of the Adjustment for Increase in Health Care Costs as calculated in the tax levy cap adjustment.

**Mr. Medio asked on this number that we are voting on can we change anything as far as line items at the next meeting. Mrs. Haley said last week she did a presentation on the budget with a 4% tax increase, which was 3 cents on the tax rate. She said the Board heard many comments so we decided to reduce the increase to 3%, which represents a 2.4 cent tax increase, which is \$38.55 on the average house of \$159,372. Mrs. Haley said today Mr. Jennings sent an email to the Board stating that the budget that will be on the agenda would reflect that change. She said the numbers that were just read reflect the 3% tax increase. Mrs. Haley said we had to cut \$226,094 out of the budget to get there. She said it was taken from the health insurance premiums line item. She said the reason for doing that is because we did receive some rates that are lower than our original projection plus we budget for open positions.**

All Members voted "yes" except Ms. Codispoti, Mr. Medio, Ms. Rios and Mr. Sbrana who voted "no." (4-4-0)  
 The motion failed.

Due to Mr. Bordley's dis-qualification. His vote is voided and the motion failed 3 votes for and 4 votes against.

JENNINGS	BORDEY	ACOSTA	CODISPOTI	FIOCHHI	MEDLO	PAGANO	RLOS	SBRANA

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Mrs. Haley said what you are voting on are the numbers that are on this agenda. The budget that we submit to the county is an account number budget and it can be changed. Mrs. Haley said the 10% transfer out of a line item pertains to during the year. She said between the time we submit to the county and May 1<sup>st</sup> we can move some things around. Mrs. Haley said the public hearing will be held on May 1<sup>st</sup> and we can consider the public's comments. Mr. Medio asked if we need 5 votes for this tonight. Mrs. Haley said correct.

Mr. Jennings said he fully supports a 4% increase. He knows it is not popular but we have to keep moving forward with costs. Mr. Jennings said what is happening is the costs are increasing and we are staying the same. He said we need to maintain our fair share of this tax burden and help the State of New Jersey. Mr. Jennings said the 4% increase is for future budgets and it will provide us with a little cushion for things in the future. He said he is also willing to support a 3% increase and feels that is as low as we can go. Mr. Jennings said we need to increase our tax levy yearly as much as possible.

Mr. Sbrana said his problem is he is being asked to vote on this at 7:36 p.m. and the email was sent out at 3:53 p.m. today. Mr. Jennings said this is just to present the budget to the county but it could change. Mrs. Haley said this budget is the same budget that she reviewed with every Board member except one and it was presented at last week's meeting. She said the only thing that changed is the health care that was reduced by \$226,094, which reduced the tax levy by that amount. Mrs. Haley said the remainder of the budget is the same. She said that she also sent an email today at 11:47 a.m. about the different options and going from a 4% to 3% increase.

JENNINGS	BORDLEY	ACOSTA	CODISPOTI	FIOCCHI	MEDIO	PAGANO	RIO	SBRANA

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**Mr. Fiocchi asked what the number is that the state recommends. Mrs. Haley said the state has a calculation of our fair share of the local tax levy which should be \$60 million dollars and the tax levy that we are proposing is \$23 million dollars.**

**Ms. Codispoti asked if any Board has ever met the fair share in the past. Dr. Haley said we have not.**

**Mr. Medio asked if Mrs. Haley said \$60 million plus. Mrs. Haley said yes. Mr. Medio said the state is saying we should be taxing \$38 million dollars more than we currently are. Mrs. Haley said yes that is what our fair share level would be if we stayed on track through the years. Mr. Medio said he cannot imagine taking another \$38 million dollars a year out of the people in this town. He said if the vote is 4 to 4 the Board should take a 5 minute recess to talk. Mr. Medio said he does not see how this is a good budget for us.**

**Mr. Jennings said a motion is on the floor and this would be a 3% tax increase to the citizens and this would go towards the education of our children.**

**Mr. Sbrana asked if the proposed budget includes the additional funds for the renovations for Landis to be a district administration building. Mrs. Haley said correct.**

**Ms. Acosta believes that we need to make sure we have sufficient funds just in case. She said the budget is extremely tight and a lot of things were taken into account. Ms. Acosta thinks the 3% tax increase does not come anywhere close to what the state says we should be at. She feels this is a step in the right direction and she is voting “yes.”**

**Ms. Codispoti thanked Mrs. Haley, her team and central administration for working very hard on the budget.**



J E N N I N G S	B O R D L E Y	A C O S T A	C O D I S P O T I	F I O C C H I	M E D I O	P A G A N O	R I O S	S B R A N A
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Ms. Codispoti emphasized when she was elected by the taxpayers her goal was to ensure that our students receive the best education possible while looking out for the taxpayers that put each of us in these seats. She believes Vineland is second to none because of our teachers, support staff and administrators. Ms. Codispoti said she is concerned that almost a million dollars will be spent on the rehabbing and the elevator for administrative offices at Landis School. She cannot believe that in the Long Range Facility Plan there is not something we can use the almost million dollars for to improve the life of our students and staff. Such as a possible addition to the art wing, new wing or expansion of the dance academy. Ms. Codispoti said she should have pushed for a budget of the whole because at least things would be more transparent. She said that she cannot in good conscience vote for the 3% tax increase.

Mr. Medio echoed the comments made by Ms. Codispoti. He said this tax increase will not go towards our student to improve their education. Mr. Medio said the money in this tax increase can be eliminated by eliminating the \$800,000 spent at Landis for an elevator and renovations. He said also by eliminating the \$450,000 for armed guards. Mr. Medio said he is voting “no.”

Ms. Rios thanked the City of Vineland taxpayers for their contribution to the continuing tax increases at the municipal, state, school, library and county levels. She is not sure how the taxpayers will continue to survive the increases and it does effect families that do not make a lot. Ms. Rios said everything is going up except paychecks. She thanked Mrs. Haley and her staff for all their work on the budget. Ms. Rios said she does not agree with the tax increase, which is why she is voting “no” for this budget.



Proposed Item

By Board Member: Approval of the following items regarding the 2017-2018 school district budget as follows:

- a. Approval of the 2017-2018 school district budget for submission to the State of New Jersey Department of Education as follows:

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Local Tax Levy</u>
General Fund	\$171,707,259	\$23,061,577
Special Revenue Fund	24,657,696	n/a
Debt Service Fund	-	-
	<u>\$196,364,955</u>	<u>\$23,061,577</u>

- b. Approval of the Local Tax Levy of 2% in the amount of \$23,061,577

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Codispoti, seconded by Mr. Fiocchi, to approve the 2017-2018 Budget a. and b. with a 2% tax increase. All Members voted “yes” on a. and b. except for Mr. Medio, Ms. Rios and Mr. Sbrana who voted “no.” (5-3-0) The motion passed. **DUE TO MR. BORDLEY’S DISQUALIFICATION, HIS VOTE IS VOIDED AND THE MOTION PASSED BY A 4-3 VOTE.**

Public

Comments: None.

Ms. Acosta recognized and congratulated students and teachers in our district for all their accomplishments during the last week.

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Acosta, seconded by Ms. Codispoti, to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
 Helen G. Haley  
 Board Secretary