

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the City of Vineland was held Wednesday, May 7, 2014 at 6:38 p.m., in the Board Room, 625 Plum Street, Vineland, New Jersey, pursuant to notice with Mr. Medio presiding and the following members present: Mr. Baruffi, Mr. DeWinne, Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. English, Ms. Morello, Ms. Rios and Mr. Ulrich. Absent: Mr. Jennings.

Also present: Dr. Guccio, Superintendent, Mr. Frey, Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. Polof, Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Schectman, Board Secretary and Mr. DeSanto, Board Solicitor. Absent: None.

Mr. Medio 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 Comment
on Agenda Items: None.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. DeWinne, seconded by Mr. DiGiorgio, to open discussion on the budget with questions, comments or changes by Board Members.

Mr. Medio asked if nothing has changed in the proposed budget that was given to the Board at the public hearing. Mr. Schectman said correct with one exception the two skilled maintenance workers that was discussed with Mr. Weaver can be added back to the budget. He said there will be three custodian positions deleted from the budget. Mr. Schectman said there is also an issue of the air conditioning unit at the high school as part of the HVAC system that is being paid for primarily by the School Development Authority (SDA) however; the SDA said they will not pay for the air conditioning piece of the HVAC unit. He said they will rely upon the school district to pay for the cost of that unit. Mr. Schectman said the initial cost of the air conditioning was \$500,000 and he presented the Board with a list of changes in the capital program that would offset approximately \$495,000 of that cost. On May 1st Mr. Weaver received an email from the SDA indicating that the cost of the air conditioning may be as much as \$557,466. Mr. Schectman said there is a question right now as to whether or not the school district can fund the entire amount since we are a SDA district and generally SDA projects are capped at \$500,000. He said discussions were held with people at the SDA to see if we will get a waiver of the \$500,000 cap for this project since we did not institute it and it is not our bidding that will take place.

Mr. Schectman said the Board should be aware that this cost could exceed \$500,000.

Mr. English asked if we looked at alternate items for the air conditioning that would not cost that much. Mr. Weaver said we looked at several options and the best option was going with the water source heat pumps, which is the most cost effective economical option. He said what happened with the additional money is they did not include the soft costs which are administrative and bidding fees. Mr. Weaver said he is confident that the number is good and there is a good chance that the total costs will come down. Mr. English said he is not feeling too confident with the project amount. Mr. Weaver said the cost was done by our Engineer and Architect of Record and he feels very confident with what was done by them. Mr. English asked if this amount comes in considerably lower where that money will go. Mr. Weaver said it would go back to the district.

Mr. Schectman said there is one other change to the budget that was submitted previously. He said following last evening's public hearing we verified with Dr. Rossi that a nurse has submitted her retirement papers so we are able to add one itinerant nurse back into the budget.

Mr. DeWinne asked Mr. Schectman to explain what SDA is and why they have the power they have. Mr. Schectman explained that there are two types of school districts in the State of New Jersey, which are ROD and SDA districts. He said ROD districts are regular operating districts and SDA districts are former Abbott districts. Mr. Schectman said we fall under the School Development Authority (SDA).

Mr. DiGiorgio asked how long ago we were informed that we had to participate in the cost of providing the air conditioning. Mr. Weaver explained that the SDA has been anticipating putting air conditioning in this building for a while and it took them ten years to advance this project. Mr. DiGiorgio said we all agree that it is important to get it done and it is a positive thing for the South building.

Mr. Baruffi asked what happens to the air conditioning systems that are already in that building. Mr. Weaver said we are factoring that into the specifications and anything that needs to be replaced will get replaced.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked what the timeline for this project is. Mr. Weaver said Phase I will be to remove the old boiler this summer and work the entire school year with the project being finished the following summer.

Mr. DeWinne said the main crux of this system is the heat that we are worried about, which is something we need to get in place. Mr. Weaver said absolutely we have one more winter to get through with this boiler.

Mr. Medio asked Dr. Gruccio if there are any other changes that she wanted to make to the Budget. Dr. Gruccio responded no. Mr. Medio said there were some changes that Board Members had discussed and we are looking to cut down on some of the expenditures because of the deficit that we are facing in the upcoming years. Mr. Medio said at this time he would like to read off the list of things and ask for a motion to change the budget and a second. He said the Board would like to eliminate a purchasing agent, 1 accountant, 1 personnel staff, 1 payroll staff, 2 unfilled supervisor positions, 4 ISS teachers at the Middle Schools, 6 total teachers at the Alternative School and some of them were already eliminated, 4 assistant principals at the elementary level, 1 assistant superintendent, transportation funds, 10 secretarial staff members, 8 guidance counselors and the Bayada Nursing Contract. He said they would like to restore the 6 computer teachers, itinerant nurses and auxiliary gym.

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. DeWinne, seconded by Mr. DiGiorgio, to change the budget to eliminate the following a purchasing agent, 1 accountant, 1 personnel staff, 1 payroll staff, 2 unfilled supervisor positions, 4 ISS teachers at the Middle Schools, 6 teachers at the Alternative School, 4 assistant principals at the elementary level, 1 assistant superintendent, transportation funds, 10 secretarial staff members, 8 guidance counselors, Bayada Nursing Contract and restore the 6 computer teachers, itinerant nurses and auxiliary gym.

Mr. Ulrich asked Mr. DeSanto what the legality is of the Board not accepting the Superintendent's budget and submitting their budget. Mr. DeSanto said according to his review of the regulations the budget is submitted to the County Superintendent by the Board of Education. He said in effect it is the Board of Education's final say on the budget. Mr. Ulrich asked if the Board can supersede the Superintendent on the actual cuts. Mr. DeSanto responded yes changes can be made between the preliminary budget that was forwarded after the public hearing and before May 14th the final submission date. Mr. Ulrich said he personally does not agree with all the cuts. He said the first time he heard about this list was the other day and he expressed his concern as to who will do the consolidated duties and how does this affect the district if you eliminate four assistant principals. Mr. Ulrich said to spend \$500,000 for the auxiliary gym is a travesty when there are other important needs in the district such as fixing up our old buildings.

Ms. Morello asked if transportation is the six buses. Mr. Medio said two and a half buses. Ms. Morello said we are talking about sliding one of the itinerant nurses into the opening for the retired nurse, keeping the two other itinerant nurses and eliminating the Bayada Contract. She asked if the Bayada Contract was to cover all of the itinerant nursing duties, how do you determine what those duties are and if there is a greater need for nursing where will that money come from. Dr. Gruccio said this would give us a nurse every day of the school year. She said we also found out that legally even a secretary can go into the system the next day and put in the notes of the Bayada nurse. Ms. Morello said her concern at this particular point is that she agrees that the itinerants stay because she thinks for continuity sake and for whatever the cost differential is some things you can't quantify with dollars. She is trying to determine that if there is a need for additional nursing services is there money somewhere in this budget for those dollars to come from. Mr. Schectman said if we spend more money for itinerant nurses then we would have spent for a Bayada Contract then that diminishes our resources. He said at this point he cannot say if there will be resources available to pay for additional nursing costs. Dr. Rossi said this would also increase the substitute costs significantly. Ms. Morello said she agrees that we should keep the itinerants and thinks it is a pretty reasonable compromise position with the elimination of the supervisor of health services. She thinks we need to keep a close eye on that and knows that staff members have medical issues that come up that no one can control and no one wants to be out on sick leave. Ms. Morello said her concern is if we have the need for a sub that supersedes what is budgeted, how we cover those expenses. Mr. Schectman said at that point we would need to scrounge the budget to find out if there are any pockets of money in the budget that we can transfer.

Mr. Medio said last night at the public hearing nurses spoke. He said his understanding was that we have nurses who come into the district from outside all of the time. Mr. Medio said it is almost a daily basis that we have a nurse who goes on a bus for a field trip with students. He said we have money for substitutes and for these extra nurses in the budget so where is the scrounging.

Ms. Morello asked if the Bayada Nursing Contract covers all of the substitute nurses for all the field trips.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if it also covers the consideration of not having the three itinerant nurses.

Mr. Medio said we had Finance Committee meetings and the committee was told quite clearly that we were eliminating 3 itinerant nurses and replacing them with Bayada nurses with a savings of approximately \$80,000. He said in regards to a question about substitutes as far as we know that was in the budget and it is not a point of discussion because it is covered.

Mr. Ulrich asked if this list was discussed last night. Mr. Medio responded no. Mr. Ulrich asked how the people affected by this list will have the opportunity to address the Board if you are asking to propose and vote on this budget tonight. He said it seems almost like a shotgun approach at the last minute. Mr. Medio said they will have the chance to come forward and speak unless we were misled. He asked if he was correct in saying that the budget was a fluent document. Mr. Schectman said he is really starting to object to that term. He said when that term was used several months ago at that time it was a fluent document. Mr. Schectman said fluidity has slowed down greatly if not stopped following the events of the end of March and April. He said the County Superintendent, as you are well aware, has been involved in this and they have locked down our budget as they have for every other district that they control. Mr. Schectman said right now any changes the Board wants to submit have to go through the County Superintendent. He said the County Superintendent has to allow us to unlock the budget and determine if he will allow any of these changes to be placed in to the budget.

Ms. Rios asked after this list is submitted the County Superintendent can he say “I want to keep all these positions” because that is what he always does. Mr. Schectman said that is correct.

Ms. Morello said when we had the meeting on April 1st with the County Superintendent and Executive Regional Superintendent they said that if we approve the proposed budget then we would have time to manipulate, maneuver, fine tune and change. She asked Mr. English if that is what he heard unless she is totally losing her mind and sense of recall. Mr. English said he heard the same thing with a lot of t and e (thorough and efficient) following it. Ms. Morello said with the budget that was accepted you work through your committee system with administration, fine tune it and get it to the place where you want it to be, which is what she heard at that meeting. Dr. Guccio said after you left that meeting we continued and went through the list item by item. She said we agreed on the things we would try to compromise on.

Mr. Medio asked what the County Superintendent said was not t and e. Dr. Gruccio said we agreed that we would look at secretarial and open positions. Mr. Schectman said it was not t and e to cut assistant principals or an assistant superintendent.

Mr. English said anything to do with the classroom is considered t and e. He said his argument goes with the maintenance of the buildings that house your children and the buses that get the children to school safe, which is t and e to him. Mr. Schectman said it is not just the classroom but the duties/responsibilities of the purchasing agent, accounting, payroll and personnel staff. He said all of those items were discussed and the Regional County Superintendent agreed that those were t and e items. He said we also discussed the two supervisory positions and he agreed that they were t and e positions.

Mr. DiGiorgio said he is going to refer to these folks as educrats because he thinks that is what they are. He said what is t and e for one district should be t and e for another district and I bet they would eat their words if they had to compare our district with the same positions in other districts. Mr. DiGiorgio said if he finds a district in Cumberland County that does not have assistant principals in elementary schools is that t and e in that district. He would like to pose that question to Mr. Bumpus but that is coming up for him.

Mr. Medio said he does not remember anyone on the Board arguing any of the points that Mr. Schectman just made. He said no one said that these things are not t and e. Mr. Medio asked Mr. DeWinne what he said the total expenditure amount is in the budget. Mr. DeWinne said I believe 196 million dollars. Mr. Medio said I think you are right. He asked Mr. DeWinne what he said the total income was. Mr. DeWinne said 186 million dollars. Mr. Medio said in my world we are 10 million dollars short in our budget. He said what these things look at is trying to make a more fiscally responsible budget. Mr. Medio said there is no one on this Board who wants to cut positions and people to lose their job. He said the bottom line is the money is not there. Mr. Medio said we keep hearing about raising taxes, which would bring in 400 hundred thousand dollars if we raised taxes 2% and 1.2 million if we raised taxes 6%. He said with all of those things being said none of those numbers come up to that 10 million dollar shortfall and that is what the people who are looking at this are looking at.

Mr. Medio said we are not going to have a lot of argument about it because it is like that old Fram Oil Filter man you are going to pay me now or you are going to pay me later. He said we are all in the same boat and if things do not start getting cut and downsized this year than they are going to start next year. Mr. Medio asked if there are any other questions because personally he will be voting “yes” on the budget. He said he will send this over to Mr. Bumpus and if he wants to write him another letter and have a little discussion, he has no problem doing that.

Mr. Ulrich asked if we are putting ourselves in a hole without full public discussion having privatized our busing services. Mr. Medio said he does not think so but we are coming up on contract negotiations with the UAW. He said that he is sure that he speaks for everyone when he says that this Board is more than open to discussion. Mr. Medio said we are willing to talk and do whatever we can and are able to do. He said that he does not know of anyone who said to him publicly or privately that they want to privatize. Mr. Medio said he has had several Board Members tell him that they want to be fiscally responsible and look at all the options that we have to look at. Mr. Ulrich said he is just concerned that we are making a decision that could privatize our fleet without proper due diligence. Mr. English said the Buena Regional School district took that plunge and are now going back to the busing business because the contract was going through the roof. Mr. Medio said he will be voting “yes” for these changes hoping to soften the blow down the road. He thinks we should look at our budget through the course of the year and see where we can make adjustments. Mr. Medio said we should be able to change around our spending as time goes by and if Mr. Bumpus wants to do something we can discuss that.

Ms. Morello said on this proposed list she personally would find it far more palatable if there was a selection of either four assistant principals or guidance. She said her lean to position would be to keep the four assistant principals in the elementary schools until we could put some kind of a plan in place to deal with the evaluations that you need to have. Ms. Morello said you need to be able to give feedback to your professional staff and work through that process. She said not to diminish the guidance counselors but they do not have a supervisory ability where the vice principals do. Ms. Morello said that she personally would be far more comfortable removing the four assistant principals from the elimination piece in order to allow those supervisory and administrative people at the building level at least a year. She said that she does see cuts coming.

Ms. Morello said that we functioned as a district without assistant principals in the past, which may not have been the best scenario. She said that we certainly did not have the supervisory demands that come with Danielson. Ms. Morello said she agrees that what happened with 30 teaching positions in Bridgeton will look like a birthday party compared to what we are going to have to be doing in the next year or two.

Mr. Ulrich said he agrees with Ms. Morello on the assistant principals but he would also like to see us take a 2% increase that we have never taken in the past twelve year. He feels like we have an obligation to do both.

Ms. Morello said she understands Mr. Ulrich's position but prior to last year and this year she sat through six other budget processes unlike these past two years or anything she has ever encountered before and hopes to never encounter again. She said before she votes to increase taxes she needs to know to a certainty what are the numbers, how decisions are being made and how cuts are going to be implemented. Ms. Morello said she is willing to look at increasing taxes but she needs to know that we are cut to the bone, what the exact cuts are, that we have them in place and the numbers are true and real. She said that is not the sense she gets.

Mr. Medio asked if anyone would object if we keep the assistant principals.

Mr. DiGiorgio said he thinks he is in the same boat as Susanne on this. He said he appreciates Mr. Ulrich's comments but we need to prepare the people out there for these types of situations in the future because they are going to be coming hard and heavy from all directions. Mr. DiGiorgio said he knows we are all looking at potential increases it is a fact and they will happen harder each year. He said that costs are continually going up and less revenue is coming in. Mr. DiGiorgio said it is a fact of life and it is not going to be easier. He is not adverse with considering some type of increase considering we can get to that happy place where we know that we are efficiently operating in every area of this district and that we do not have items or line items in the budget that are unnecessary.

Mr. DeWinne said if he can save teaching jobs by cutting administrative jobs that is how he would vote. He has real problems with cutting teachers.

Mr. English said the elementary level is our foundation and he asked if the eight guidance counselors are the counselors at the elementary level. Mr. Medio responded yes.

Mr. English said Vineland High School is the last two years of a student's career and they are pretty much on their way. He asked if we looked at possibly doing something at that building.

Ms. Morello said the flip side of that point is we are in theory winding people up to go out into the world little kids, little problems, big kids, big giant enormous problems. She said a student at the high school level with proper guidance may receive some financial aid, may get accepted into a technical school or may just get talked into coming to school and getting a high school diploma.

Mr. English said that he meant general positions at the high school not necessarily guidance counselors. He said there are less than twelve students in some classes and he does not understand why because this is a discussion we have had numerous times. Mr. English said if you can lessen the staff because the numbers dictate that you do not need them, then it makes a lot more sense than removing eight guidance counselors.

Mr. Ulrich said we have low classes sizes at the middle school level with 12 to 15 students.

Mr. Morello said you have to look at the bubble coming up because there is a bubble and we do not want to be back in the TCU's again.

Mr. Medio asked the Board if they would like to leave the assistant principals in.

Ms. Morello said she would be more comfortable with the proviso that if there starts to be movement to plan what will happen without them. She said there is a very real possibility some principals, who are on the fence about retiring, may decide to retire and some people may look for other jobs. Ms. Morello said principals in the State of New Jersey are hard to find and retiring in droves because of these situations. She said in a year it may not be as dire as all this but attrition may help us. Ms. Morello said she thinks we need to have a focus plan of attack on how to move forward and not just dive in and hope it happens well.

Mr. Medio asked for the second and the motion withdrawn.

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Morello, seconded by Mr. DiGiorgio, to withdraw the elimination of 4 assistant principals from the proposed budget. All Members voted “yes.”

Mr. English said he feels the same way about transportation. Mr. Medio said we can look at transportation with the Ad Hoc Committee. Mr. English said he is not happy with the removal of the guidance counselors. Mr. Medio said somewhere along the line you have to swallow hard and move forward. He said the computer teachers are being put back which is what everybody was in agreement with. Mr. English asked if we are still cutting two computer teachers. Mr. DiGiorgio asked if there are any retirements or attrition in those positions that we do not know about. Dr. Rossi said not at this time but there may be.

Ms. Morello said she is trying to compromise and to see Mr. Frey’s plan of action at the middle schools. She said one would hope that with eight years of technology by the time students attend middle school there would be some level of expertise. Ms. Morello said she is in favor of keeping the two computer teachers in the middle schools provided there is a set schedule and routine with structure. She said that we can revisit this to see if it is working.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. DeWinne, seconded by Mr. DiGiorgio, to change the budget to eliminate the following a purchasing agent, 1 accountant, 1 personnel staff, 1 payroll staff, 2 unfilled supervisor positions, 4 ISS teachers at the Middle Schools, 6 teachers at the Alternative School, 1 assistant superintendent, transportation money, 10 secretarial staff members, 8 guidance counselors, Bayada Nursing Contract and restore the 6 computer teachers, itinerant nurses and auxiliary gym. All Members voted “yes.”

Ms. Rios voted “yes” but would have approved administrations budget as well because she thinks that both budgets have pros and cons. She said that she is going to carefully study each contract and position. Ms. Rios said she will vote “yes” on items that she thinks are of great importance and a necessity to the district. She will vote “no” on items that she thinks the district could have and can do without.

Mr. Ulrich echoed the comments made by Ms. Rios and thinks there is compromise to be had in these positions. He will not support any contract for an auxiliary gym when there are other maintenance concerns in the district that are far more pressing than an auxiliary gym. Mr. Ulrich said he will vote “yes” to forward this to Mr. Bumpus for consideration.

Mr. Medio echoed Ms. Rios position and agrees whole heartily with everything she said and his vote is “yes.”

Recommendation:

Resolution: Mr. Schectman read a resolution to convene into executive session for the following reasons as outlined in N.J.S.A. 10-4-12. Any matters falling within the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer. Any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance, promotion or disciplining of any specific prospective public officer or employees or current public officer or employee employed or appointed by the public body, unless all individual employees or appointees whose rights could be adversely affected request in writing that such matter or matters be discussed at a public meeting. The nature of discussion is the contracts for central office administration. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Education hereby declares that its discussion of the aforementioned subject(s) may be made public at a time when the Board Attorney advises the Board of Education that the disclosure of the discussion will not detrimentally affect any right, interest or duty of the School District or any other entity or person with respect to said discussion.

Motion: A motion was made by Brian DeWinne, seconded by Ms. Morello, to approve the executive session resolution. All Members voted “yes.”

Mr. Medio said after we take this vote we will go into the work session then return to the executive session after the work session is finished.

Mr. DeSanto wanted to clarify that this is a vote for executive session at this special meeting. He said there is a separate resolution for the work session. Mr. DeSanto said if the Board is not going to go into executive session or discuss the impact of the “Rice” notice then he suggested addressing the resolution now. Mr. DeSanto said under the Open Public Meetings Act and the Rice case whenever a public body such as the Board of Education is proposing to meet in executive session to discuss personnel the individual employee is entitled to receive notice of that and has the option to have that discussion take place in public. He said nothing changes other than the meeting moves from executive session in the back room to out here. Mr. DeSanto said no one can participate and the public/employees get to observe what is going on. He said five central office administrators were given “Rice” notices for the executive session that was proposed for this special meeting. Mr. DeSanto said all five of them have invoked their rights to have the executive session moved out here and their contracts discussed publicly. He said if the Board proposes to have the discussion about them it cannot be held in executive session must be held out here in the Board room.

Mr. DeSanto said his concern is that the Resolution is for the 6:30 special meeting not the work session. He asked Mr. Medio if he is proposing to adjourn the special meeting and go into the work session after the recess. Mr. Medio responded yes because we are already an hour behind on the work session. He said after the work session is over we would come back to the executive session.

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Morello, seconded by Mr. DiGiorgio, to suspend the special meeting to open the work session. All Members voted “yes.”

The special meeting was suspended at 7:58 p.m. to the work session.

The special meeting resumed at 9:47 p.m.

Mr. Medio said this is the public executive session discussion concerning the renewal of Dr. Gruccio, Mr. Schectman, Mr. Frey, Mrs. Polof and Dr. Rossi's contracts.

Mr. DeSanto said this is involving everyone but Dr. Gruccio's contract because we have to deal with the issue regarding how many Board members can participate in that. Mr. Ulrich asked if there will be a Doctrine of Necessity established for Dr. Gruccio's contract. Mr. DeSanto said that is what he is recommending when the time comes to determine renewal.

Mr. DeWinne asked Mr. DeSanto to explain the process.

Mr. DeSanto said under the accountability regulations the high level administrators are given contracts that run from July 1 to June 30th. He said currently the Assistant Superintendents, Business Administrator, Executive Director of Personnel have one year contracts. Mr. DeSanto said a decision will have to be made by the Board because those contracts expire June 30th. He said the Board will need to make a decision whether you will renew those contracts. Mr. DeSanto said that Mr. Medio requested for the Administrators to be “Riced” because he was entering a discussion on the renewal of those contracts. He said under the Open Public Meetings Act and the Rice Decision personnel discussions are in executive session however; the individual members have the right to say if they want the discussion in public so they along with the public can hear the Board's discussion. Mr. DeSanto said the individual employees are not permitted to speak or have a dialogue. He said it is basically the public and the employees eavesdropping on the executive session.

Mr. DeWinne asked if there is a provision in the contract that notice of termination or non-renewal has to be so many days prior. Mr. DeSanto said the contract does not say that you may give so many days' notice of non-renewal but the County Superintendent is involved in this process and he must approve any new contract prior to the Board adopting it. He said this probably means that at some point you should make a decision prior to June 1st.

Mr. Ulrich asked what the proposed salary increases are. Mr. Medio said that is what we are discussing. Mr. DeWinne asked what salaries are in the 2014-2015 contracts. Ms. Morello said for the 2014-2015 school year Mr. Schectman's salary is \$122,400, Dr. Rossi's salary is \$117,300, Mr. Frey's salary is \$119,646, and Mrs. Polof's salary is \$137,700. Mr. DiGiorgio asked if the Board approved new salary amounts for the one-year contracts. Mr. Medio said no. Mr. DiGiorgio asked for these individuals starting salaries. Mr. DeSanto said the 2014-2015 amounts are two percent over the existing amount. Mr. DiGiorgio asked how that was determined.

Mr. DeWinne asked Mr. DeSanto if he recalls what the items are that we compensate for. Mr. DeSanto said they have been carried forward and are in the current contract. He said there were no changes in the basic terms other than the increase. Ms. Morello read the Membership Fees listed in the administrator's contracts.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if the Board is provided with performance evaluations. Ms. Morello read the Evaluation clause in the administrative contracts. She said in that clause it states "The evaluation shall include recommendations as to the areas of improvement in all instances where the Board deems performance to be unsatisfactory." Ms. Morello asked how the Board would know if an unsatisfactory performance was given. Mr. Medio asked Dr. Gruccio if she performed the evaluations on these administrators. Dr. Gruccio responded yes. Mr. Medio asked what the results of the evaluations were. Dr. Gruccio said she does not know they are on file. Mr. Medio asked if they were all good. Dr. Gruccio responded yes. Mr. DeSanto said the rule with respect to Board members access to employee personnel records including the evaluations is that it is on an as needed or need to know basis. He said you cannot just generally look at anyone's file. Mr. DeSanto said when you are considering a contract or renewal of a contract for an individual you are permitted to see the evaluations. He said the evaluations should not leave the building.

Ms. Morello said she would like to hear when evaluations are satisfactory too.

Mr. Ulrich asked if there are any doctoral stipends in the contracts. Mr. Medio responded no.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if he can take notes when reviewing the evaluations. Mr. DeSanto said yes but the notes are confidential and cannot be disclosed with anyone outside the Board.

Ms. Morello asked if everyone has tuition reimbursement in their contract. Mr. Ulrich said he thinks the last Business Administrator had tuition reimbursement but he believes it was removed. Ms. Morello said in the contracts for Mr. Frey and Mrs. Polof under tuition reimbursement it states “not to exceed \$4,800.”

Mr. DeWinne asked if vacation days are a standard 4 weeks. Ms. Morello said twenty vacation days on July 1st. She said in the past this Board has gotten roasted when an Assistant Superintendent who left used every day they had and clocked out when all days were used. Mr. DiGiorgio said with the city if you do not finish out your year you have to pay your days back.

Mr. Medio said we gave other employees a 1.6% cost of living raise so that would be the raise for these contracts also. Dr. Gruccio said that raise was given to secretaries not administration.

Mr. DeWinne asked Dr. Gruccio if during holiday breaks and snow day’s administrative practice is you are not here. Dr. Gruccio said we are not here.

Mr. Ulrich asked if we are deciding tonight compensation and whether to renew the individuals. Mr. Medio said we can discuss compensation. He asked the Board if they want to leave the increase at 2% or reduce it to 1.6%. Mr. DeWinne said his opinion is that they should receive a zero increase. Dr. Gruccio said they received a zero last year. Mr. Ulrich said he personally thinks the cost of living index increase is fair. Mr. DiGiorgio asked if we are deciding on this number tonight. Mr. Medio said if we can unless the Board would like a week to think about it. Ms. Rios asked if we are under the assumption that everyone will be renewed and how will that work. Mr. Medio responded no that is future discussion. Ms. Rios asked then why are we discussing salaries now if we do not rehire someone and hire someone at a lesser rate. Mr. Medio said we are discussing numbers now because the Superintendent will be sending these contracts to the Regional Superintendent for his approval. He said whether or not we approve the contract or hire the individual is another vote.

Mr. DiGiorgio said he agrees with Mr. Ulrich for the increase not to exceed the cost of living index.

Mr. Ulrich asked Mr. DeSanto if Ms. Rios comment about hiring someone at a lesser rate presents labor issues. Ms. Rios said what she meant was why are we discussing salaries if someone is not renewed and we hire someone at a lower amount. Mr. DeSanto said the discussion is a flat across the Board increase.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if we are able to address each increase individually. Mr. Medio said yes.

Ms. Morello said for the sake of continuity and fairness she thinks that Membership Fees is a topic that needs to be approached. Mr. Ulrich asked what the amount of dues allowed is. Ms. Morello said \$1,280.00. Dr. Guccio said the dues are based on your salary. Mr. Ulrich said he would like to see PSA taken out.

Mr. Baruffi asked if the other administrators did not receive a salary increase last year. Dr. Guccio said we all did not. Mr. DiGiorgio said there was an adjustment made for one administrator. Dr. Guccio apologized and said that was correct. She said all four of these contract amounts are less than what the high school principals make.

Ms. Morello said while that is a very cogent thought part of the problem is that everybody always wants to make more than somebody else. She said her salary increase was 1.9% and she knows that it is more than a lot of people get. Ms. Morello said at a certain point it has to stop somewhere and it is not necessarily a reflection of an employee's value or job performance.

Mr. DeWinne said with these positions come a lot of work and responsibility but they are also plum positions with a lot of perks.

Mr. Ulrich asked once the contracts have been approved by the county is that when the Board votes. Mr. Medio responded yes and asked when they will be sent to the Regional Superintendent. Mr. Schectman said they were already sent. Mr. Ulrich asked if it was a little presumptive to send the contracts with a 2% increase. Mr. Schectman explained that the County Superintendent wants the proposal submitted so he can review it on behalf of the Board to make sure it is not in excess of any of the caps.

Ms. Morello said why don't we all pack our bags and go home because apparently the County Superintendent is running the Vineland Board of Education. She said we report to him but nobody reports to us and gives us guide lines, time lines and the information that we need to run this Board as duly elected state officials. Ms. Morello said that she is getting tired of this.

Mr. Ulrich said he does not see a problem with budgeting a 2% amount in the budget for the 2014-2015 school year. He said that he does have a problem with the contract being sent over with an increase. Ms. Morello said the contract was sent to the County Superintendent before being sent to the Board. Mr. Ulrich agrees with Ms. Morello that the Board should have seen the contract first.

Mr. DeWinne asked Mr. DeSanto if he saw the draft or does he know the county's procedure. Mr. DeSanto said he has not seen anything.

Mr. DiGiorgio said Dr. Gruccio compared the administrators to another individual in the district who has been in his position almost thirty years. He said the longer someone is here they are receiving contractual increases within their steps. Mr. DiGiorgio thinks it is all relative. Mr. Medio said it is definitely relative because you have to remember that the Board's direction has been to cut down on salaries.

Ms. Morello asked Finance Committee members if they heard anything about these contracts needing to be sent. Mr. DeWinne said no. Ms. Morello asked Mr. Medio if he had any conversations with anyone about this. Mr. Medio responded no. She said that she has a major major problem with this.

Mr. English asked Mr. DeSanto what the standard procedure is for this. Mr. DeSanto said his opinion on how the budget operates differs from the County Superintendent. He believes Administration is directed by the County Superintendent to do certain things, which they follow. Mr. DeSanto does not know if there is a correct procedure it seems like it is his procedure. Ms. Morello said would a phone call not be apropos before one sends contracts to at least the Board President or Finance Chair.

Mr. Ulrich said when he was the Board President what occurred was this is the proposal and you can discuss it with the Board.

Ms. Morello said that she is sure the County Superintendent did not wake up one day, make a phone call and say send these. Ms. Morello said regardless of what the regulations say somewhere along the line there needs to be some kind of a calendar, guideline or something that says here is the timeline and here is the process. Mr. DiGiorgio said maybe the County Superintendent assumed that the process already took place.

Mr. DeSanto said several weeks ago he distributed to the board the budget guidelines and he is referring the Board to those guidelines to see what the department says should be the process.

Ms. Morello said let me understand this, in addition to being spanked by the County Superintendent over a whole variety of things and having a very unflattering description of our district, now the onus is on us to double check on when submissions are made. Mr. DiGiorgio said hopefully they are all following the guidelines established by the State of New Jersey. Ms. Morello said she would like to promulgate some guidelines of her own.

Mr. Baruffi asked if the Finance Committee has an Assistant Superintendent being cut. Mr. Medio responded yes. Mr. Baruffi asked who will be cut and who does what job. Mr. Ulrich said it has to be voted on and there has to be a non-renewal. He said he is going to be looking at this budget on a case by case basis and will not be supporting items on the Board initiated budget. Mr. Ulrich said he does not want anybody to get the impression that everything on that list is going to be done. Ms. Morello said it does not mean that it will be approved at the county level. She said we can send whatever we want and everything we send could come back disapproved.

Ms. Morello asked what we are going to do with what we discussed in terms of the sliding scale fee for NJASA. Mr. Ulrich said we just remove it from the list.

Mr. Ulrich said there is a certain degree of continuity that we lack in our district because of turnover and Board actions. He said if you do not renew half of the administrative staff then the people who replace them with are going to have built in excuses as to why in that first year they could not succeed. Mr. Ulrich said if you want the district in constant upheaval then hire new people. Mr. DeWinne said the one continual thing in life is change.

Mr. DiGiorgio said he appreciates Mr. Ulrich's comment about continuity but it goes both ways. He said this Board has experienced people in these positions who have decided to leave to no fault of our own.

Ms. Morello said successful enterprises run because there is redundancy and a plan in place. She said key personnel are only key to a certain extent and she does not see that we are there yet. Ms. Morello said you also have to see forward movement and part of the Board's responsibility is ensuring that there is forward movement. Mr. Ulrich said it is hard to look at forward movement when the Board does not support the Superintendent and is in this constant state of flux. He said that he has found with his experience on the Board that sometimes personalities come into play among Board Members it is who they do not like or cannot work with. Mr. Ulrich said who the Superintendent can work with and are they doing their jobs are what the Board should be looking at.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Herbert G. Schectman
Board Secretary

HGS:df

