

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the City of Vineland was held Wednesday, March 23, 2011 at 6:02 p.m., in the Board Room, 625 Plum Street, Vineland, New Jersey, pursuant to notice with Mr. Franceschini presiding and the following members present: Mr. DeWinne, Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. Fanucci, Dr. Mounier, Ms. Rios, and Mr. Ulrich. Absent: Mr. English and Mrs. Phillips.

Also present: Dr. Banks, Superintendent, Dr. Gruccio and Dr. Elliott, Assistant Superintendents, Mr. Franchetta, Board Secretary, Ms. Greenfield, Executive Director of Personnel and Mr. Pepper, Associate Board Solicitor. Absent: Mr. DeSanto, Board Solicitor.

Mr. Franceschini 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.

Flag Salute:

Mr. Franceschini introduced Mr. Kevin Franchetta, School Business Administrator, to present an overview of the 2011-2012 Budget.

Mr. Franchetta said in November/December meetings were held with the principals and department heads to prepare draft school based and departmental budgets. In February the superintendent held a principals meeting to discuss the budget, which was all prior to knowing what our actual revenue amount would be. Mr. Franchetta said during the months of January, February and March, finance committee and board meetings were held to discuss the budget development. On February 22nd the Governor presented his address on the status of the state budget and aid. Mr. Franchetta said on February 23rd we received our budget figures from the Department of Education. On March 2nd the board adopted a preliminary budget for submission to the county office on March 4th. Mr. Franchetta said we received permission from the county superintendent to advertise the budget, which was in Friday's *Daily Journal*. He said at tonight's public hearing the public has the opportunity to make any comments on the budget that they wish. Mr. Franchetta said the school board election will be held on April 27th. He said when the public votes on the budget the only piece that they are approving is the amount that is raised by taxation. Mr. Franchetta said our proposed 2011-2012 budget is \$191,757,965 with a local contribution of \$21,731,439. He said the amount is still approximately half of what the state feels that we really should be generating as a community. Mr. Franchetta said the good news is that there is no tax rate increase based on this budget. The school tax rate is \$1.018 and the amount raised by .01 will be \$213,471.90. Mr. Franchetta said this amount increased by one hundred thousand dollars due to an increase in ratables in the city.

Mr. Franchetta said from the 5 year tax comparison the ratables have increased due to new construction in the city. Our tax rate has remained stable and went down because last year the budget was defeated. Mr. Franchetta said we had to revert back to our minimum tax levy and were not able to pick up the increase in ratables last year. The district receives funds from the following eight major sources: Fund balance, local tax levy, local non-tax revenue, state provided funds, federal provided funds, local, state and federal grants. Mr. Franchetta said we are going to utilize \$8,859,881 of fund balance and \$2,059,881 is identified in the audit as our excess surplus that we have to allocate in next year's budget. We are also anticipating this year a \$6,800,000 of surplus generated. Mr. Franchetta said \$149,709,037 is received from state aid and \$10,584,914 from federal aid.

Mr. Franceschini asked if Medicaid reimbursement comes from special education. Mr. Franchetta responded yes. He said that students who receive IEP services are claimable to the federal government and we receive a small portion of the amount.

Mr. Franchetta said 78% of our funding comes from state aid. He reviewed the 5 year budget comparison and budget breakdown.

Mr. Franceschini asked what was spent last year on substitutes for principals. Mr. Franchetta said not a lot because usually when a principal is out a day or two the assistant principal takes over.

Mr. Franchetta said as far as staffing we began the year with 1,973 employees and we are proposing in next year's budget 1,988. He said most of the changes are due to special education. Mr. Franchetta encouraged everyone to vote in the school board election on Wednesday, April 27, 2011. He said because of the holidays the election was moved to the last week in April and will be on a Wednesday. The polls will be open from 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and if anyone is going away for the spring recess absentee ballots can be obtained through the county clerk's office.

Mr. DeWinne asked what the deadline is for absentee ballots. Dr. Banks said April 6th is the deadline. Mr. Ulrich mentioned that absentee ballots can also be done online.

Mr. Fanucci asked what impact the reevaluation will have on the future tax levy. Mr. Franchetta said he does not know the reevaluations effect on our school district.

Mr. DiGiorgio said revenues are not going in the right direction and we are fortunate to have had some very good years of growth in Vineland as far as ratables are concerned. He feels the future is going to hold a different story.

Mr. Ulrich said when the funding formula was redone in the Corzine Administration and went to the Supreme Court they feel that Vineland's fair share is about 44 million dollars. Mr. Ulrich said if that ever comes to be he does not know what we can do as a city.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Fanucci, seconded by Ms. Rios, to open the Public Hearing. All Members voted "yes."

Public Comments: Val Francisci, Instructional Aide
Ms. Francisci expressed her concern in regards to rumors that because she was the campaign manager for Mr. Franceschini and Mr. Ulrich her vote for the UAW Contract should not be counted or there should be a re-vote. She said the second rumor is that she was urged by said board members to persuade UAW Members to vote to approve the contract. Ms. Francisci said it is true that she ran the campaigns for Mr. Franceschini and Mr. Ulrich however; not once in the meeting did she reference either school board members when expressing her opinions. She said that she is an extremely straight forward honest person and she educates herself on issues before she speaks out about them.

Peter Coccaro, Vineland School District Employee
Mr. Coccaro expressed his concern that Hispanic individuals were not given notification in Spanish and others were asked to leave the city of Vineland and travel a great distance to vote on the UAW Contract. He said when they arrived the polls were closed. Mr. Coccaro said he has legal questions that needed to be answered that were not and statements were made during the meeting that had no basis. He does not believe that the union vote was given a fair shake on the understanding of that particular contract. Mr. Coccaro pleaded to the board to give consideration on tabling this matter to allow the members a couple of weeks to digest it.

Lee Burke, Vineland Resident
Mr. Burke said he believes transportation costs amount to 5% of the entire budget and the curriculum/staff development fund budget is 1.69%. His opinion is that this is a ridiculous misappropriation of money.

Mr. Burke respectfully requested for the board president to accept a motion, which he is proposing, to direct the superintendent and board secretary to review all district bus routes for the intent of reducing or consolidating including establishing bus pick up and drop off routes throughout the district.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Fanucci, seconded by Ms. Rios, to close the Public Hearing. All Members voted “yes.”

The board recessed to executive session at 6:37 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 7:35 p.m.

Mr. Franceschini said as per Mr. Burke’s request to look into the efficiency of our busing and to possibly change some of our transportation financing into other areas is noted and currently under review with the Finance Committee.

Recommendations:

FRANCESCINI	ULRICH	DEWINNE	DIWINGI	ENGLISH	FANUCCI	MOUNIER	PHILLIPS	RIOS
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RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The Board adopt a tentative 2011-2012 school district budget for submission to the voters as follows:

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Local Tax Levy</u>
General Fund	\$165,695,188	\$21,731,439
Special Revenue Fund	27,075,127	0
Debt Service Fund	0	0
Less: Transfer From		
General Fund	1,012,350	
TOTAL	\$191,757,965	\$21,731,439

Further, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A: 23A-7.3, the Board establish the maximum travel amount for the 2011-2012 school district budget at \$213,850 and the amount spent to date in the 2010-2011 school year for travel has been \$39,806.49. Additionally, the supporting documentation of this budget contains an itemization of certain expenditures required under administrative regulations.

Mr. DeWinne said his questions have been answered. He said we dodged a large bullet this school year and still believes that cuts are coming down the road. Mr. DeWinne said since he has been on the board our budget has been defeated twice. He is requesting for the taxpayers who know and trust him to vote yes for this budget as he is voting.

Mr. Ulrich concurs with Mr. DeWinne and believes that we are fortunate and dodged a bullet this year.

2. The Board approve travel for district members as required by N.J.A.C. 7A:10A-8.3 and school field trips as per lists provided and on file with the Secretary of the Board

All Members voted “yes” except Dr. Mounier who voted “no.” (6-1-0)

All Members voted “yes.” (7-0-0)

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FRANCESCINI	ULRICH	DEWINE	DIORGIO	ENGLISH	FANUCCI	MOUNIER	PHILLIPS	RIOS
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					1			2

3. The Board ratify the Agreement between Amalgamated Local No. 2327 – UAW, AFL/CIO and the Board of Education for the period of July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2013

All Members voted “yes.”
 (7-0-0)

4. The Board suspend with pay, the employee whose name is provided and on file with the Secretary of the Board; and furthermore, that in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:16-2, N.J.A.C. 6A:32-6.3 and Vineland Board of Education Policy #3160, the Board is requiring that said employee submit to a fitness for duty examination

All Members voted “yes.”
 (7-0-0)

The meeting was adjourned by voice vote at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Franchetta, CPA
Board Secretary

KJF:df