

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the City of Vineland was held in the Board Room, 625 Plum Street, Vineland, New Jersey, Wednesday, June 13, 2012 at 7:10 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Ulrich presiding and the following members present: Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. Fanucci, Mr. Medio, Mr. Mercado, Dr. Mounier, Mrs. Phillips and Ms. Rios. Absent: Mr. English.

Also present: Dr. Guccio, Interim Superintendent, Dr. Schneider, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Ludy, Board Secretary, Dr. Rossi, Executive Director of Personnel, Mr. DeSanto, Solicitor, Mrs. Polof, Special Education Director, press and public. Absent: None.

Mr. Ulrich 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: Students from Johnstone Elementary School led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Special

Presentation: Dr. Guccio introduced Mrs. Terry Kuhnreich, Teacher, to present the Sister Rose Thering Essay Contest winner.

Mrs. Kuhnreich introduced Aiden Rodriguez, a Vineland High School senior in her Search for Conscience Class, who is the first place winner in the Sister Rose Thering Essay Contest. She said Aiden spoke about something he did that would represent Sister Rose Thering who taught at Seton Hall University for many years and had a beautiful reputation as far as bringing people together through intolerance.

Mr. Rodriguez thanked the board for this recognition tonight.

Dr. Guccio introduced Mr. Mario Olsen, VASA President, to present the Administrator of the Year Award.

Mr. Olsen said the Administrator of the Year Award is a very prestigious award given each year to someone selected by the membership. He said it is his pleasure to introduce Ms. Teri Godlewski, a special education supervisor, as the VASA Administrator of the Year.

Ms. Godlewski thanked the board for recognizing her and VASA members for this honor.

Dr. Guccio introduced Mr. Edward Zatzariny and Mr. Craig Phillips to present the Veterans Memorial School Jazz Band/Intermediate String Ensemble.

Mr. Zatzariny and Mr. Phillips introduced the jazz band and string ensemble at Veterans Memorial School.

Dr. Guccio introduced the VHS Marching Band along with their advisor Mr. William McDevitt.

Mr. McDevitt and the drum major presented a picture plaque to Mr. Ulrich, Board President. He discussed all the events that the band participates in each year and thanked the board for their support.

Dr. Schneider presented the HIB/Suspension Report for the month of May.

The board recessed to executive session at 7:33 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 8:20 p.m.

Mr. Ulrich said items #24 and #25 have been removed from the agenda by the superintendent and will not be discussed tonight.

Approval of Minutes: Upon motion by Mr. Fanucci, seconded by Mr. Mercado, the minutes were approved from May 9, 2012, May 11, 2012 and May 16, 2012. All Members voted “yes” except Dr. Mounier who voted “yes” on all minutes but noted an error on the May 9, 2012 special meeting and Ms. Rios who voted “yes” on all minutes except May 16, 2012 she “abstained.”

Report of the
Secretary/Custodian
Of School Monies:

Upon motion by Mr. Fanucci, seconded by Mr. Mercado, the reports of the Secretary and Custodian of School Monies for the months of February, March and April 2012, which are in agreement were approved as submitted and on file in the Minute Book, and the Board approved its monthly certification of budgetary major account fund status and the Board Secretary’s monthly certification as on file with the Secretary. All Members voted “yes.”

Solicitor's Report: Mr. DeSanto distributed to the board a resolution authorizing a lease with the State of New Jersey of certain property known as 860 N. Orchard Road, Vineland, NJ and authorizing the Board President and Board Secretary to execute said lease and any other related documents on behalf of the board. Mr. DeSanto said this is the lease that the board approved last year for the Almond Road property where pre-school classes are located. The rent/utility costs are identical and all the terms and conditions are the same as last year. Mr. DeSanto said this was approved by the State House Commission so the board is authorized to approve this lease. He said the term of the lease is October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if the term can be shortened. Mr. DeSanto said he knows the board has interest in acquiring the property. He assured the board that if they do acquire the property any time this year the rental payments would cease.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Fanucci, seconded by Mr. Mercado, to approve a resolution authorizing a lease with the State of New Jersey of certain property known as 860 N. Orchard Road, Vineland, NJ and authorizing the Board President and Board Secretary to execute said lease and any other related documents on behalf of the board. All Members voted "yes" except Dr. Mounier who voted "no."

Public Comment on
Agenda Items:

Steve Lewis

Mr. Lewis expressed his concern in regards to his recommended transfer by his supervisor.

Melissa Allen

Ms. Allen expressed her concern over not receiving a notice of employment as of May 15, 2012 regarding her employment status for the 2012-2013 school year.

Lee Burke

Mr. Burke feels the board is not off to a good start by not approving the Superintendent's contract. He said when Dr. Gruccio was made Interim Superintendent the board was split and is still split or we would not be having all these long executive session discussions. Mr. Burke said the board's elected position does not give them the opportunity to dictate under law how the superintendent can hire, fire, transfer and eliminate non-tenured positions.

Mr. Ulrich said in executive session the board was examining four district contracts that by law they have to review. He said the board was being frugal with the contracts and questioning items and things that were in past contracts that they wanted removed.

Mr. DeSanto said the board was discussing the administrators' contracts and property matters. He said no teacher contracts or transfers were discussed.

Recommendations:

B. Proposed for review or discussion or adoption by Board Members:

Mr. Ulrich asked for a motion to approve the contract for Superintendent, Dr. Mary Gruccio, contingent upon the final review and approval by the County Executive Superintendent of Schools.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Fanucci, seconded by Mr. Mercado, to approve the contract for Superintendent, Dr. Mary Gruccio, contingent upon the final review and approval by the County Executive Superintendent of Schools. All Members voted “yes” except for Dr. Mounier who voted “no.”

Approval of Bills: Upon motion by Mr. Fanucci, seconded by Mr. Mercado, the bills were approved and warrants issued for same. All Members voted “yes” (\$7,961,982.44).

Emergent Item(s)
(with prior approval) None.

Mr. Ulrich said due to personnel conflicts the board needs to make a decision as to whether or not to change the July 11, 2012 work session date.

Dr. Gruccio asked if the work session and regular meeting can be combined.

Mr. DeSanto said in the past, when there was a combined meeting, the meeting usually begins at 6:00 or 6:30 p.m. with the work session and the regular meeting following.

The board decided to have a combined work session and regular meeting on July 18, 2012 at 5:30 p.m.

Resolution: Ms. Ludy read a resolution to recess into executive session on **Wednesday, July 18, 2012** regarding personnel matters, contract negotiations, property negotiations, and/or property contracts and pending or anticipated litigation.

Motion: Upon motion by Mr. Fanucci, seconded by Mr. Mercado, the resolution was passed. All Members voted “yes”.

Public Comments:

Karen Stratoti, Vineland Resident

Ms. Stratoti requested for the board to decline the proposed reassignments of the principal and vice principal of D'Ippolito Elementary School.

Ronald Walker, Parent

Mr. Walker expressed his concerned that not one administrator, board member or supervisor attended the Wallace Middle School eighth grade graduation.

Mr. Ulrich said over the last two weeks he has attended an event every night and can only be at one place at one time. He cares about this district and tries to attend the events.

Dr. Guccio said she was at the high school that night presenting a scholarship in memory of her husband.

Mr. DiGiorgio said the board is elected and we try to do the best we can. He suggested that in the future for administrators/supervisors to be chosen to attend the functions.

Steven DeCredico, Teacher

Mr. DeCredico asked if the principal transfers were tabled or postponed. Mr. Ulrich said Dr. Guccio pulled it off the agenda for further deliberation. Mr. DeCredico said he hopes a level of discussion exists around the need to maintain whatever consistency can be had. He spoke in support of not transferring Richard Panas out of the high school.

Ms. Rodriguez, Parent

Ms. Rodriguez spoke in support of not transferring Gail Curcio and Melissa Hannigan-Painter from D'Ippolito Elementary School.

Board Member

Remarks:

Mr. Medio said previous boards were assigned to attend events at each school. He said Mr. Walkers point was well taken and it is something that can be easily addressed and solved.

Dr. Mounier said this is a difficult job which takes a lot of time and thought. As to the transfers he wishes we would come to a resolution and minimize the number of changes.

Dr. Mounier said as far as the role of board members with respect to superintendent recommendations he does not see that being an elected official should deprive him of the right to exercise judgment that he was elected to exercise. He said as long as he is up here he will vote yes or no according to his conscience.

Mrs. Phillips thanked the people in the music program and is glad we are supporting our music/art programs. She also thanked everyone who spoke tonight. Mrs. Phillips said she does not agree with moving teachers or principals. She wished everyone a happy end of the year.

Mr. DiGiorgio congratulated the band and thanked everyone who participated in presentations this evening. He said the board has to take the arrows that the public launches at them for decisions that they do not have any control over. Mr. DiGiorgio said for the future you need to keep in mind that the ultimate direction does not come from the board.

Mr. Fanucci thanked and congratulated the students on the wonderful awards they received. He wished everyone a happy safe summer.

Mr. Mercado thanked the Johnstone students for the flag salute. He congratulated Aiden Rodriguez and Teri Godlewski on their awards. Mr. Mercado thanked the students in the band. He asked if in the future the board can recognize support staff members in the district. Mr. Mercado said it has been a great school year and he is proud to be a school board member. He encouraged all the graduating seniors to attend project graduation.

Ms. Rios thanked the Johnstone students for the flag salute and everyone who participated in tonight's presentations. She congratulated all the award recipients along with Nathan Frey on his new position. Ms. Rios said she will take everyone's concerns into consideration and will do what is best for the children in the district. She said that she takes time off from work to attend school functions and is very active in the Vineland School District. Ms. Rios apologized for the events that she could not attend.

Report/Remarks by
Board President:

Mr. Ulrich said he is out in the community attending a broad range of events whether they are sponsored by the community or school. He said the board members are dedicated and attend various meetings and events.

Mr. Ulrich said he does not feel the board should be the day to day operators of the district. He said what you have to keep in mind is that change is not bad and does not always have to be negative. Mr. Ulrich said if the board wants to hold the superintendent accountable then we need to let her have what is reasonable in her recommendations.

Dr. Guccio said the reason we do not have a recommendation tonight is because she has been listening to input from the people that are impacted by these moves, the board of education and public. She has put many hours into making these decisions and sometimes change is healthy. Dr. Guccio said we are a district that is in need of improvement and there is a lot of change that has to take place if we are going to ever change that. She said she has pulled these transfers from the agenda so that she can put all the thought and effort that she can into what she is recommending. Dr. Guccio said this has nothing to with any one person and is not targeted at people. She said it is a big picture and we are a district that needs to change, which is why these decisions are being made. Dr. Guccio said she and the board do not always agree but the fact of the matter is the board works hard and it is a thankless job. She thanked Dr. Schneider and Mrs. Barber for all their help. Dr. Guccio announced that Mr. Ulrich will be attending the FBI Academy for three months and she wished him the very best. She also thanked all staff members for everything they do for our children and wished them a safe happy summer.

Adjournment: The Board adjourned the meeting by voice vote at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cherie Ludy
Board Secretary

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