



LIVINGSTON BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP/VOTING MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 5, 2021

Executive Session - Via Zoom - 6:00 p.m.

Public Session - Virtual Meeting Via Zoom and Facebook Live – 7:00 p.m.

A **Workshop/Voting Meeting** of the Livingston Board of Education was held on this date in the large conference room in the Administration Building and via Zoom and Facebook Live. The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by the Board President, Samantha Messer, who announced that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by amendment to notice approved at the Board's reorganization meeting on January 4, 2021 and posted at the Board of Education office and communicated to *The Star Ledger*, *West Essex Tribune*, *TAPinto Livingston* and the Livingston Township Clerk.

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

Executive Session

Whereas, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-11, permits the Board of Education to meet in closed session to discuss certain matters; now, therefore be it

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education adjourns to closed session to discuss:

- Personnel

Action may be taken upon return to public session. The full length of the meeting is anticipated to be approximately 60 minutes and be it

Further Resolved, the minutes of this closed session be made public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

Mrs. Khanna seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khanna, Mrs. Konner, Ms. Messer
Nayes - None

At 7:05 p.m., Ms. Messer reconvened the public meeting.

Members Present: Pamela Chirls, Seth Cohen, Vineeta Khanna, Ronnie Konner, Samantha Messer and Aditya Desai

Also in Attendance: Dr. Matthew Block, Steven Robinson, Lisa Capone-Steiger, Mark Stern, Susan Burman and Joann Goldberg

There were approximately 100 members of the public and staff watching remotely through the webinar and a Facebook Live Stream.

Workshop Items

1. LPS' Own Healthcare Heroes

Dr. Block shared a video that recognized and honored the district's nursing staff for all their hard work during the past year. The LEF is providing LPS scrubs to all nursing staff.

2. Budget Discussion

Mr. Robinson stated the tentative budget was submitted to the county office and that we haven't heard anything from Trenton about the stimulus money we read we were getting in NJ.com. Mr. Robinson reminded everyone that the only time we can make a change to the budget will be at the Public Hearing, which is scheduled for May 4.

Mrs. Konner suggested we be proactive and prioritize how we would like to spend the stimulus money if we do receive it.

Mr. Robinson responded he has heard the board's concerns about class size and utilizing the funds to reduce them; however, he cautioned that this is a one time infusion of money and the following year could have a budget issue once these funds are no longer available.

Mrs. Chirls added they are asking that we responsibly make class sizes smaller utilizing the spaces that we already have.

Mrs. Konner added we also need to identify learning loss and how that can be addressed now and during the next school year.

Superintendent's Report

1. Spring Forward Update

Dr. Block explained that students were welcomed back today and the schools came alive. Dr. Block added he was happy to see the enrollment levels double at the secondary level and hopes that those who are responsibly quarantining after the break also plan to send students back.

Dr. Block continued windows were opened and tents were delivered to schools today to provide us with outdoor spaces and we continue to work to get back as close to normal as we possibly can.

Dr. Block explained the district set up vaccination appointments today for staff that, unfortunately, didn't work out and thanked Jeanne Silberman, Jaime Zales, Shari Bookvar, Liz Conklin, Greer Gelman, Stacy Wayne, David Tave, Geri Giller, Barbara Warter, Karen Nave, Jayme Tave, Stefanie Lichtstein and Robyn Levine for stepping up and making phone calls on behalf of our staff to get them new vaccination appointments.

Board Reports

Mr. Cohen created a questionnaire for the board to use as they begin the process of interviewing other boards and superintendents about optimal board size. The board discussed the logistics on the number of interviews to hold as well as who they would like to interview.

The board will put together a list of who they would like to interview and send it to Ms. Messer who, in turn, will share it with Dr. Block to put in Board Notes.

Mr. Robinson will check on the timeframe so the board can choose a date to vote on whether or not to add a question about increasing board size on the November ballot. It was tentatively decided that the board would make a decision at the June 21 meeting.

Mrs. Konner and Mrs. Chirls attended a Diversity Committee meeting where they discussed how to promote a feeling of respect and to educate students on anti-Asian bias.

Mrs. Konner and Mrs. Chirls attended the Garden State Coalition of Schools meeting.

Mr. Cohen and Mrs. Konner attended the Essex County meeting where they workshopped with different districts.

Mr. Cohen attended the Youth Sports Council meeting and they are moving forward with gathering proposals to complete a new environmental study so they can work on building a new turf field in the community.

Mrs. Konner asked if there have been any conversations with the Township about their new DPW building and a place for us to house our buses in case we need to set aside money in the budget. Mr. Robinson has not had any update so will reach out to Barry Lewis. Ms. Messer will reach out to Mayor Klein.

Public Input on Agenda Items ~ up to 15 minutes

Rachel Kemelman, 29 Norman Court, asked what the intention is for adding the plexiglass barrier to the elementary student desks and Dr. Block responded we added them as an additional mitigation measure.

Anthony Rosamilia, President of Livingston Education Association, echoed the thanks for the great job that the nurses have done this year.

Mr. Rosamilia and Dr. Block attended another session of the Rutgers Labor/Management Collaborative that talked how embracing the labor/management collaborative model truly benefits the district, board, community and staff.

VOTING ITEMS

BUSINESS

Mr. Cohen moved the following:

3.1 Waiver for Retired Teachers to Substitute

Whereas, the Division of Pensions and Benefits (the "Division of Pensions") in the New Jersey Department of the Treasury has adopted a rule at N.J.A.C. 17:1-17.14 ("Return to Employment Rule") which sets forth the terms upon which a retiree can return to employment with the same employer; and

Whereas, the Division of Pensions has administered the Return to Employment Rule to require that there be a six (6) month period between the date of retirement and the return to employment, and also that there has been no pre-arrangement of that return between the employee and the former employer; and

Whereas, the Division of Pensions has administered the Return to Employment Rule to require that retirees returning to work with the same employer and wishing to continue to collect their pension while also getting paid for their work cannot work full time, since working full time may require re-enrollment in the applicable retirement system; and

Whereas, the health emergency created by the current COVID-19 Pandemic has produced significant staffing shortages in our district, and has caused there to be a reduction in the number of qualified candidates applying for various education positions; and

Whereas, in order to obtain additional staffing resources, State departments, agencies, boards, commissions and independent authorities and local municipal and county governments (“Government Agencies”) may need to enlist the efforts of retirees on a full-time basis and within the six (6) month period specified in the Return to Employment Rule; and WHEREAS, because these retirees will be returning to their former employment specifically in response to the unprecedented emergency created by the COVID-19 pandemic, there is less reason to fear that they did not have a “bona fide” retirement; and

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Livingston Board of Education would support a resolution initiated by the Governor which would suspend N.J.A.C. 17:1;17.14 and allow, for the duration of this Emergency, for retirees to return to employment in any capacity, without having to re-enroll in any retirement system.

3.2 Strategic Plan Agreement

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the agreement between the Livingston Board of Education and TMI Education in the amount of \$15,750.

3.3 Payment of Bills

Whereas, the Board Secretary has audited certain vendor claims as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:19-2 and Board Policy 6470 and presented them to the Livingston Board of Education with the recommendation they be paid, now therefore be it

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the payment of the following bills in the amounts listed and attach a complete copy of these bills to the minutes of this meeting.

Fund	Name	Amount
10&11	Regular	1,457,723.78
12	Regular	201,960.00
20	Regular	278,416.17
60	Cafeteria	91,168.98
	TOTAL	\$2,029,268.93
Regular Checks	91211-91501	1,938,099.95
Cafeteria	1290-1297	91,168.98
	TOTAL	\$2,029,268.93

3.4 Board Secretary Report – February 2021

Whereas, the Livingston Board of Education has received the Report of the Board Secretary for February 28, 2021, consisting of:

- 1) Interim Balance Sheets
- 2) Interim Statements Comparing Budgeted Revenue with Actual to Date and Appropriations with Expenditures and Encumbrances to Date
- 3) Schedule of Revenues - Actual Compared with Estimated
- 4) Statement of Appropriations Compared with Expenditures and encumbrances, and

Whereas, the Livingston Board of Education has received the report of the Treasurer for February 28, 2021, which report is in agreement with the Report of the Board Secretary, and

Whereas, these reports show the following balances on the date indicated:

	Cash Balance	Appropriation Balance	Fund Balance
(10) General Current Exp. Fund	18,770,844		
(11) Current Expense		25,878,822	8,009,270
(12) Capital Outlay		121,375	1,978,235
(20) Special Revenue Fund	727,681		
(30) Capital Projects Fund	183,789		
(40) Debt Service Fund	145,962		
Total:	\$19,828,276	\$26,000,197	\$9,987,505

Whereas, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:20-212(d), the Board Secretary has certified that as of February 28, 2021, no budgetary line item account has obligations and payments contractual orders which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the district board of education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8, 18A:22-8.1, now therefore be it

Resolved, the Livingston Board of Education accepts the above referenced reports and certification and directs that they be made part of this resolution by reference, and be it

Further Resolved, the Livingston Board of Education certifies that, after review of the Secretary’s monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of its knowledge no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C.6:20-2.13(d) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

3.5 Transfers

Whereas, the Superintendent of Schools recommends certain transfers among accounts in the 2020-2021 budget for February pursuant to Board of Education Policy 6422, now therefore be it

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education ratify transfers pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8.1 and N.J.A.C. 6:20-2A.10:

<u>Object</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>From</u>
610	General Supplies	200,000	
270	Health Benefits		200,000
	TOTALS	\$200,000	\$200,000

Mrs. Khanna seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khanna, Mrs. Konner, Ms. Messer
Nayes - None

PERSONNEL

Mrs. Konner moved the following:

4.1 Resignations

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education accepts the resignations of:

Name	Position	Reason	Location	Last Day of Employment
<i>Dr. Emily Sortino</i>	Director of Special Education	Resignation	CO	May 21, 2021
<i>Kathleen Carey</i>	Teacher of English	Retirement	HMS	June 30, 2021
<i>Carmela Damante</i>	Elementary School Teacher	Resignation	Hillside	June 30, 2021
<i>Meghan Bailey</i>	TOSD	Resignation	Collins	May 14, 2021
<i>Phyllis Smith</i>	Instructional Aide	Retirement	LHS	June 30, 2021

4.2 Appointments

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the applications indicated below (*) for emergent hiring for the following appointments under the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:16-1 et. seq., N.J.S.A. 18A:39.17 et. seq.; N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13 et. seq. All appointments are contingent upon reference checks in accordance with P.L. 2018, c.5.

Name	Location	Title	Tenure Track/LOA or LT Replacement	Replacing	Guide	Step	Salary	Effective Date
<i>Nicole Rothman</i>	LHS	College Counselor	First Year Tenure Track	New	MA+16	5	\$67,819, plus 30 days over the summer of 2021 @ per diem rate	8/30/2021
<i>Donna Anello</i>	Collins	Elementary School Teacher	First Year Tenure Track	C. Greenwald	MA+32	10	\$83,658	8/30/2021
<i>Bracha Katz</i>	BHE	School Psychologist	One Year Leave Replacement	M. Seidman	MA+32	1	\$67,504	8/30/2021
<i>Mary Aileen Petinglay</i>	BHE	TOSD	Leave Replacement	C. Wittjohann	BA	1	\$53,240 (pro-rated)	5/24/2021
<i>Mary Aileen Petinglay</i>	BHE	TOSD	One Year Leave Replacement	C. Wittjohann	BA	1	\$54,550	8/30/2021
<i>Ashley Strysko</i>	BHE/TBD	TOSD	One Year Leave Replacement	K. Santos/ TBD	BA	2	\$54,550	8/30/2021
<i>Stacy Lodge</i>	MPE	Playground Aide	NA	NA	NA	NA	\$15.50/hr	3/17/2021

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the appointment of the ABA Discrete Trial TA's and Instructional Aides as listed on **Attachment AA**.

Mrs. Chirls seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khanna, Mrs. Konner, Ms. Messer
Nays - None

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Cohen moved the following:

5.1 HIB Report

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education accepts the findings of HIB cases.

Mrs. Konner seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khanna, Mrs. Konner, Ms. Messer
Nays - None

PREVIEW OF MAY 4, 2021 PUBLIC HEARING/VOTING AGENDA

The board reviewed the upcoming items for the May 4 agenda. Mrs. Konner requested there be some reference to teaching experience added to the job description for the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

Public Hearing on Budget

1. Presentation
2. Discussion
3. Questions and Comments from Public
 - Speakers are asked to stand and state name and address for the board and public
 - Each person may speak once with a three (3) minute time limit until all who wish to be heard have had an opportunity to speak

Adoption of 2021-2022 Budget

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the 2021-2022 Proposed School District Budget:

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Special Revenues</u>	<u>Debt Service</u>	<u>Total</u>
2021-2022 Total Expenditures	\$119,939,725	\$2,550,471	\$8,388,300	\$130,878,496
Less: Anticipated Revenues	\$8,823,772	\$2,550,471	\$735,092	\$12,109,335
Taxes to be Raised	\$111,115,953	-----	\$7,653,208	\$118,769,161

Superintendent's Report

1. Mental Health Presentation

PROGRAM/CURRICULUM

1.1 Textbooks/DVDs

1.2 Student Teacher

STUDENT SERVICES

2.1 Out of District Placement

2.2 Related Services/Medical Consultants

BUSINESS

3.1 Joint Transportation Agreement with Educational Services Commission of Morris County

3.2 Joint Transportation Agreement with Sussex County Regional Transportation Cooperative

3.3 Essex Regional Educational Services Commission

3.4 Settlement Agreement

3.5 Parental Contract for Student Transportation

PERSONNEL

4.1 Transfers

4.2 Substitutes

4.3 Job Descriptions

4.4 Stipends

4.5 Extra Period Assignments

4.6 Mentor Fees

Public Comment ~ up to 15 minutes

There was no public comment.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

There was a discussion about whether our current social media policy is sufficient to address what the board can say as individuals, what they can say as a group and if they should be a part of other groups at all.

It was decided that we would gather samples of social media policies from other districts and to have our attorney come to a meeting to revisit this discussion and provide guidance to the board.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:35 p.m., Mr. Cohen made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mrs. Konner seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khanna, Mrs. Konner, Ms. Messer
Nayes - None

Respectfully submitted,

Steven K. Robinson
Board Secretary