

I. CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE

The September 21, 2021 Special Public Meeting of the Edison Township Board of Education was called to order by Board President, Mr. Jingwei (Jerry) Shi, at 7:00 P.M. at the Education Center, 312 Pierson Avenue, Edison, NJ 08837.

II. ROLL CALL

Mrs. Kluck took the roll, and the following members were present:

Mr. Jingwei (Jerry) Shi, President, Mr. Mohin Patel, Vice President, Mrs. Shannon Peng, Mrs. Elizabeth Conway, Dr. Yunxia (Yuna) Chen, Mrs. Carol Bodofsky, Mrs. Shivi Madhukar, Mrs. Virginia White and Mr. Biral Patel

Also in attendance were Bernard F. Bragen, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent, Mrs. Ann T. Kluck, Assistant Business Administrator/Board Secretary, and Mr. John Shahdanian, Board Attorney.

III. OPENING STATEMENT

Mr. Shi read the following opening statement:

“The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of, and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon.

In accordance with the provisions of this act, the Edison Township Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the Board of Education Administrative Offices. Copies of these notices were sent to the Home News and Tribune and the Star Ledger on September 15, 2021.

The Public may participate at regular meetings in accordance with the By-Laws and the applicable State regulations.”

IV. ADJOURN TO PRIVILEGED SESSION

Mrs. Kluck read the following resolution:

Privileged Session

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231 PL 1975 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE,
BE IT RESOLVED: by the Board of Education of the Township of Edison, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

The public shall be excluded from discussion of and action upon the hereinafter-specified subject matters.

The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:

- Board Matters

It is anticipated at this time that the above-stated subject matter shall be made public at such time as the need for non-disclosure no longer exists. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Mr. Shi asked for a motion to approve the Privileged Session Resolution at 7:07 P.M. Mr. M. Patel made the motion, seconded by Mrs. Peng. Mrs. Kluck took a roll call vote, and the result was as follows:

AYES: Mr. B. Patel, Mrs. White, Mrs. Madhukar, Mrs. Bodofsky,
Dr. Chen, Mrs. Conway, Mrs. Peng, Mr. M. Patel, Mr. Shi

NAYS: None The motion was carried.

V. RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

Mr. Shi asked for a motion to reconvene this September 21, 2021 Special Public Meeting of the Edison Township Board of Education to open session at 8:43 P.M. Mr. M. Patel made the motion, seconded by Mrs. Peng. Mrs. Kluck took a roll call vote, and the result was as follows:

AYES: Mr. B. Patel, Mrs. White, Mrs. Madhukar, Mrs. Bodofsky,
Dr. Chen, Mrs. Conway, Mrs. Peng, Mr. M. Patel, Mr. Shi

NAYS: None The motion was carried.

VI. RESOLUTION

Mrs. Kluck read the following Resolution:

MOTION: To direct the President of the Board of Education to file a complaint with the School Ethics Commission based on the behavior and comments of Board Member Biral Patel.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS – RESOLUTIONS ONLY

Multiple residents questioned whether it was the whole Board or just a member who was filing the complaint and asked who was paying for the filing. They also stated that the whole Board is not able to file Ethics complaints, only individuals. Residents also questioned the procedure used for hiring Mr. Biral Patel.

Mr. Shi asked for a motion to approve the Resolution to file a complaint with the School Ethics Commission. Mr. M. Patel made the motion, seconded by Dr. Chen. Mrs. Kluck took a roll call and the result was as follows:

AYES: Mrs. White, Dr. Chen, Mrs. Peng, Mr. M. Patel, Mr. Shi

ABSTAINED: Mrs. Madhukar, Mrs. Bodofsky

NAYS: Mr. B. Patel, Mrs. Conway

The motion was carried.

VIII. BOARD MEMBERS – OPEN DISCUSSION

Mr. Biral Patel made a statement explaining all the good things he is doing for the students and the Edison community.

Dr. Chen stated that she admires Mr. Biral Patel's good deeds, but she cannot ignore what he has done. She stated that she voted yes to show support for President Shi and it was her ethical duty.

Mr. M. Patel also stated it was his ethical duty and that this was needed due to charges against Mr. B. Patel.

Dr. Chen mentioned that she is not versed in law, and felt this matter needed to be sent to the Commission.

Mrs. Madhukar asked if the available agendas could be shared with the Board and public 48 hours prior to each meeting.

Mr. Shi stated that the information regarding the Resolution is a sensitive matter.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS

A resident stated that Mr. Shi does not share information early enough with the public.

Tony DeStefano, resident, questioned if "Board Matters" to the extent known is an adequate notice. He questioned the attack on a board member at a previous meeting and asked why the Board kept quiet in this matter. He stated that the Board Attorney is not a board member and speaks rudely to residents. He is only present to give legal advice. Mr. DeStefano felt the Resolution was not needed and that he plans to file an Ethics Charge against the Board.

Christo Makroupoulos, resident, felt that this was not a legal meeting.

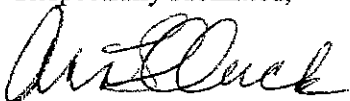
A resident felt this was a political agenda.

A resident asked Dr. Bragen that if this was a private matter, how did Christo Makroupoulos find out about it prior to the meeting.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further questions or comments forthcoming, Mr. Shi asked for a motion to adjourn this September 21, 2021 Special Public Meeting of the Edison Township Board of Education at 10:00 p.m. Mr. M. Patel made the motion, seconded by Mrs. Peng and approved by all members present.

Respectfully submitted,



Ann T. Kluck
Board Secretary
ATK:JMC