

Chesterfield Township Board of Education
Special Meeting 7:00 p.m.
Thursday, July 12, 2018
MINUTES

The special meeting of the Chesterfield Township Board of Education was opened at 7:02 p.m., by President Jignesh Shah.

Welcome to this meeting of the Chesterfield Township Board of Education. If there is any agenda item, which you would like to discuss with the Board, please do so during that portion of the agenda entitled, "Public Comments-Agenda Items Only".

When you do address the Board, please state your name and address and limit your comments to three minutes. The total length of time for public comment is unrestricted unless a time limit is imposed by the Board President. Please refrain from comments that are likely to invade an individual's privacy rights or are not related to matters before the Board. They will not be permitted.

Roll Call

Board Members present:

Mr. Jignesh Shah, President
Mrs. Laura Bond, Vice President
Ms. Christina Hoggan
Mrs. Amy Jablonski

Board Members absent:

Dr. Terran Brown

Other administration present:

Mr. Scott Heino, Superintendent
Mr. Patrick Pisano, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Open Public Meetings Act Notice

The Chesterfield Township Board of Education has given public notice of this meeting, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, in the following manner July 8, 2018:

- Posting written notice on the official bulletin board at the Chesterfield Township School.
- Mailing written notice to the Burlington County Times and Trenton Times newspapers.
- Filing written notice with the Clerk of Chesterfield Township.
- Filing written notice with the Secretary of this body.
- Mailing written notice to each person who has requested copies of the regular meeting schedule and who has prepaid any charge fixed for such service.

Board of Education Important Dates:

July 18, 2018 Regular Monthly Meeting

Correspondence (Attachment)

Letter dated July 11, 2018, to the Board of Education from Kelley Johnson, regarding the educational welfare of the children.

Adjourn to Executive Session

A motion was made at 7:06 p.m. by Mrs. Bond and seconded by Ms. Hoggan to approve the following resolution to adjourn to executive session:

EXECUTIVE SESSION RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq. (Open Public Meetings Act) provides that the Board of Education of the Chesterfield School District may exclude the public from that portion of the meeting at which the

Board of Education discusses certain matters as set forth in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12; and,

WHEREAS, the following subjects shall be discussed in the session of the Board of Education closed to the public:

Legal Matter

RESOLVED, that the aforesated meeting is closed to the public for the reason set forth above in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the discussion in executive session will be available for disclosure to the public at such time as it is no longer necessary to maintain the confidential nature of the items discussed.

A call of the roll indicated an affirmative vote. All ayes. No nays. Motion carried.

Return to Public Session

A motion was made at 7:13 p.m. by Ms. Hoggan and seconded by Mrs. Bond to return to public session.

A call of the roll indicated an affirmative vote. All ayes. No nays. Motion carried.

Budget Plan for Additional State Aid Presentation

Scott Heino presented the budget plan for additional State Aid.

Public Comment – Agenda Items Only

When you address the Board, please approach the podium, state your name and address and limit your comments to three minutes. Please refrain from comments that are likely to invade an individual's privacy rights or are not related to matters before the Board. They will not be permitted.

Scott Richter stated he has been a resident for 20 years. He thanked the board and everyone else who was involved in the fight for funding. He stated his taxes have tripled in 20 years, and feels some of the money should come back to the taxpayers. He knows the school is underfunded but as a tax payer he feels things are getting out of hand. He asked why are teacher's being paid \$97,000 a year?

Dawn Sheridan said thank you to Mr. Heino, Mr. Pisano and the Board. She stated that social media in this community is so out of control. She asked if we can all work together now that the funding and the plan are here. Let's set a good example for our children.

Michael Walker stated that he has been a resident since 2007. He stated that he voted in support of this school even though his children do not attend Chesterfield School. He is troubled by all the needs of this school since it is new, and wants to know why things are breaking down already. The feeling he is getting is that the school wants to be 100% fully funded before the homeowners will get any tax relief. A percentage should be refunded to the homeowners each year. I think it would be an equitable thing to do.

Bethann Molesky and Kim Breiland co-presidents of the CTEA stated they are here to represent the teachers, secretaries and custodians. We haven't had our contract settled in 2 years. You could settle our contract for two percent of the funding. Staff moral is very low. A happy staff want to come to work and work hard. We are asking the Board to use the funds to settle our contract by September so we can come back happy.

Jeness Jose stated that she is a new resident to Chesterfield. She stated that they do miss a lot from the West Windsor school district but feel Chesterfield has done a terrific job with the funds they had. She has deep concerns with the funding amount for Pipeline safety only being \$10,000. She asked why the amount is so low. This can cause serious damage to our children. When she was buying her home in Chesterfield the realtors pushed the new school. She asked why are so many items outdated already. Why not ipads vs. chromebooks?

Myra Wille stated she is speaking for the senior citizens, we have seen our taxes quadruple in the 25 years she has lived in Chesterfield. We need something back for the community. It took my neighbor 2 years to sell his property. Our property taxes are too high and I am afraid I won't be able to sell my house. Look into using shared shares services, everyone will benefit from it.

Bill Boerth said thank you and stated that it would have been nice to have had a handout of the plan.

Jackie Halaw stated that she has never been so pleased at a board meeting before. It's was so nice to see that presentation. I have a petition I would like to hand the board with 160 signatures for tax payers to wait for tax relief. She read her petition that stated to settle the teachers' contract, improve curriculum and instruction, keep classes small and ensure proper staffing of teachers and paraprofessionals. She stated that the New Jersey State Constitution guarantees a "thorough and efficient education for all New Jersey children and that each year the state calculates the adequacy budget or the amount of money to provide a thorough and efficient education. Stacy Lindes gave Jackie Halaw her 3 minutes of public comment time; Jackie continues to read her petition. Our teachers and staff have done more with less; the Chesterfield community has rallied by paying more than the fair share. Despite our community's best efforts, our children have been deprived of an education comparable with surrounding communities. The education and welfare of the children must be the primary focus and be rectified first. This fight for fair funding is not over. We must use this funding wisely for the benefit of the children while considering the long-term goals of full funding and tax relief.

Bhaskara Modukuru said thank you for all your hard work, he asked what has made the ratings for the school go from a 9 to a 7. Was it the lack of funding? I would like to improve the ratings of the school. He asked if we hold 50% of the money for next year.

Andrea Katz thanked everyone for everything, for all the calls, emails and for attending meetings at the state house. She stated that the fight is not over. Until Governor Murphy signs the S2 anything can change. If S2 is not law we will be an over aided district next year. We still need 100% funding. I hope we can put this money towards the kids first before taxes. She stated that if we use this money for anything else other than our students we may not get more funding.

Kelley Johnson stated that a board member was given more than 3 minutes at the last board meeting to present his personal option so the public should be given more time if needed. She stated that she made a spreadsheet and \$1,200 is what the taxpayer would get for 100% of our local fair share. Mr. Heino said if they gave \$300,000 back in tax relief that is equal to \$150 per year or \$0.42 a day per household. She stated that she feels the school could put better use to this money. The board has a duty to act in the welfare of the children; she stated that she doesn't think the board can ethically give this money back to the taxpayers. She asked why are we going to give the money back.

Matthew Litt asked if the bylaws prevent the Board from doing anything else but what is best for our children. I don't see how the Board has permission to give tax relief. I think the roll of the Board is strictly for students.

Lorrie Their asked why we are adding new programs when we are not funded at a 100%? Why have we not added back thing that have been cut in the past like paraprofessionals and field trips. Can we please add back the old things before bringing new programs like choral?

David Sass asked what if we get more than 1.6 what are there other items we don't have. If we still don't have programs how can we think about a tax refund. We need to build up the school. Education is why people come to a town. If we build a better school it will help the community. We can revisit the issue of a tax relief in a year or two.

Cleo Jacobs Johnson stated that she feels instructional time needs to be increased in math and reading. Technology is wonderful but I want the Board to consider increasing instructional time.

Maggie Brittain said thank you for the presentation, it was wonderful. She stated that she didn't see money being put towards settling the teachers' contract. If that is missed how many other things are getting missed. We need to settle the contract. Please reconsider when allocating the funds.

Lalith Pasupuleti stated that he is disappointed with the plan. The school needs to be fixed before the tax relief. The plan is fluff. He stated that he would like to see programs such as advanced math, reading, and afterschool programs and the teachers' contract settled. The format of these meetings is not working, it needs to be changed.

Colleen Morgan stated that the sociological wellbeing of children was not in this plan. Teachers need to be happy; we need a whole school support system. We need field trips and to be able to invest in our staff. Happy teachers have to be more important than tax relief.

Amy Emanski stated that the teachers and staff really care about our kids. We need to show them respect by settling the contract.

Karthik Prabhakaran stated that he would love money back but we don't need it the school does. There are tons of programs missing. Can we share the items that are being missed? He asked why the teachers' contract wasn't in the plan. Teacher salary is less than county average. Teachers are most important. He asked why is there so much maintenance needed on a new building? Put the money in maintenance reserve and save it.

David Schwalje said Scott you have a tough job and are in a difficult spot. I think you really care. The simplest investment is in education. I don't understand why one third of the funding is going to none education. The bike racks do not seem needed. He thanked Andrea Katz and said all this hard work fighting has been great.

Gentleman #1 stated he called the governor's office several times for the benefit of the school. There are other things that still need to be done for the school. Put some money toward pipeline safety for the safety of the children.

Shamita Kumar stated that she does not want tax relief at this time, but feels the Board should consider it in the long run. Education drives property values up. She stated that the teacher's salary includes 40% for benefits, the salary is only 60% of that number in the plan. Character education and discipline are areas our teachers need help with. Show a vision of 3-5 years.

Gentlemen #2 asked what is the process for the budget if you do get the money. He stated the plan should have been put on the website prior to the meeting.

Dianne Mizerak stated she has been a resident for 30 years. When her son went to school here Chesterfield had everything you could want, the programs were great. It is very nice of you but I cannot believe you are talking about giving tax relief; you are here for the kids not the tax payers. The list of items on the plan are all needed, the kids need these items you are trying to offer, they were all offered here at one time. The funding needs to go to the kids, they are the next generation.

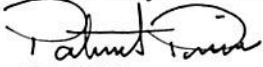
Mr. Shah stated that the next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 18, 2018, and we will vote if we get the additional funding.

Mr. Heino explained the process from the State. He said we are hoping to here if the funds are available on Monday, July 16, 2018, if the Board decides to give tax relief there will be a time table for that process. I hope the Board will approve the plan. I will post the plan on the website.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Mrs. Bond and seconded by Mrs. Jablonski at 9:02 p.m. All agreed.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Pisano', written over a horizontal line.

Patrick Pisano

Business Administrator/Board Secretary