

January 6, 2025

The Stillwater Township Board of Education met on January 6, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Stillwater School Library for the Board Reorganization Meeting.

The meeting was called to order by René Metzgar, Board Secretary, at 7:00 p.m. In accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law, the time, date and location of this meeting was provided to the New Jersey Herald & Star Ledger on November 19, 2024. Notices were posted in the Stillwater School, Town Hall, Stillwater Post Office, Swartwood Post Office and the Stillwater School Website.

Mrs. Metzgar led the flag salute.

### **REPORT OF ELECTION RESULTS:**

Mrs. Metzgar reported the following information:

Jeffery Parrott, Sussex County Clerk, certified the following election results for the Stillwater Township Board of Education:

Three-year full term for membership on the Board of Education:

Margaret Frey	1,667 votes
Cheryl Williver	1,656 votes
Darrick Franek	1,643 votes
Write-In	57 votes

### **OATHS FOR NEW & RETURNING BOARD MEMBERS**

(N.J.S.A:18A:17.11)

Mrs. Metzgar administered the oaths to the following people for the 3-year full term for membership on the Stillwater Township Board of Education:

For the 3-Three-year full term for membership on the Board of Education:

- Darrick Franek
- Margaret Frey
- Cheryl Williver

Mrs. Metzgar congratulated all returning board members!

Mrs. Metzgar then called roll:

The following Board members were present: Mrs. Galante, Mr. DeGroat, Mrs. Kraft, Mrs. Williver, Mr. Franek, Mrs. Valeich, Mrs. Voris, and Mrs. Frey.

Absent: Mrs. Thibault.

Also present were William Kochis, Superintendent, René Metzgar, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, Marissa Cramer, Principal/Supervisor of CST and Special Education/Basic Skills, and members of the public.

## **NOMINATIONS & ELECTION OF BOARD PRESIDENT**

Mrs. Metzgar opened the floor for nominations for President of the Stillwater Board of Education.

Nominations: Mr. Franek nominated Mrs. Galante. Mrs. Galante accepted the nomination.

Mrs. Metzgar asked for any further nominations. Hearing none;

Mrs. Metzgar closed the nominations for Board President and called for a vote.

Vote: Mr. DeGroat- Mrs. Galante; Mrs. Galante-Mrs. Galante; Mr. Franek- Mrs. Galante; Mrs. Frey- Mrs. Galante; Mrs. Voris-Mrs. Galante; Mrs. Valeich-Mrs. Galante; Mrs. Williver- Mrs. Galante; Mrs. Kraft- Mrs. Galante.

Unanimously, Mrs. Krista Galante is elected Board President.

## **THE MEETING IS TURNED OVER TO THE BOARD PRESIDENT**

### **NOMINATIONS & ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENT Board President**

1. The Vice President shall be elected by a roll call vote of a majority of Board members in attendance.

Mrs. Galante opened the floor for nominations for Vice President of the Stillwater Board of Education.

Nominations: Mrs. Frey nominated Mrs. Williver, second by Mr. DeGroat. Mrs. Williver accepted the nomination.

Mrs. Galante asked for any further nominations. Hearing none;

Mrs. Galante closed the nominations for Board Vice President and called for a vote.

Vote: Mr. DeGroat- Mrs. Williver; Mr. Franek- Mrs. Williver; Mrs. Frey- Mrs. Williver; Mrs. Voris- Mrs. Williver; Mrs. Valeich- Mrs. Williver; Mrs. Williver- Mrs. Williver; Mrs. Kraft-Mrs. Williver; Mrs. Galante- Mrs. Williver.

Unanimously, Mrs. Cheryl Williver is elected Board Vice President.

**ANNUAL MOTIONS**

**That the following Annual resolutions be approved:**

- 1. Motion to adopt the present Stillwater Township Board of Education policy manual.
- 2. Motion to designate the New Jersey Herald as the official newspaper for the 2025 calendar year and the Star Ledger/NJ.com or The Township Journal as an alternate newspaper and for select advertising.
- 3. Motion to approve the following locations for posting all legal notices for the 2025 calendar year:
  - Stillwater Post Office
  - Stillwater Town Hall
  - Swartswood Post Office
  - Stillwater Board of Education Office
  - Stillwater Elementary School
- 4. Motion to hold Committee of the Whole meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month & regular meetings of the Board of Education on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month, unless otherwise noted, at 7:00 p.m. in the Stillwater School Library according to the attached schedule:

**Committee of the Whole Meeting**

February 10, 2025  
 March 10, 2025  
 No Committee Meeting in April  
 No Committee Meeting in May  
 June 2, 2025\*  
 No Committee Meeting in July  
 No Committee Meeting in August  
 September 8, 2025  
 No Committee Meeting in October  
 November 3, 2025\*  
 No Committee Meeting in December

**Regular Meeting**

January 27, 2025  
 February 24, 2025  
 March 24, 2025  
 April 28, 2025  
 May 12, 2025\*  
 June 23, 2025  
 July 21, 2025\*  
 August 18, 2025\*  
 September 22, 2025  
 October 14, 2025\* (Tuesday)  
 November 17, 2025\*  
 December 15, 2025\*

\*Change from 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Monday

- 5. Motion to approve the following resolution regarding public relations and professional services maximum costs for the 2025-2026 school year.

Whereas, NJAC 6A:23A-5.2 provides that a school district must establish a maximum dollar limit prior to budget preparation for public relations and professional services fees, and

Whereas, the Stillwater Board of Education has established the following maximum dollar limits as required:

Public Relations	\$ 3,500
Architects	\$100,000
Attorneys	\$40,000
Auditors	\$16,000
School Physician	\$ 2,500

Whereas, if these professional services exceed the maximum amount listed, the Stillwater Board of Education will consider another motion to increase amounts listed.

**Moved By:** Mr. DeGroat **Seconded By:** Mrs. Frey

**Roll Call Vote:** Mrs. Galante-Aye; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Aye; Mr. Franek-Aye; Mrs. Frey- Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Aye; Mrs. Thibault- Absent; Mrs. Valeich-Aye; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motions carried.

6. Board Members took turns reading the Board Member Code of Ethics.
7. Motion to acknowledge receipt and review of the State of New Jersey Code of Ethics as required by N.J.S.A. 18A.

**Moved By:** Mrs. Frey **Seconded By:** Mr. DeGroat

**Roll Call Vote:** Mrs. Galante-Aye; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Aye; Mr. Franek-Aye; Mrs. Frey- Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Aye; Mrs. Thibault- Absent; Mrs. Valeich-Aye; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motions carried.

8. Review of board member contact information. If any changes/additions are needed, please notify Mrs. Metzgar.

## **ANNUAL BOARD APPOINTMENTS & COMMITTEES**

Mrs. Galante appointed the following Delegates:

1. Delegate and Alternate to the Sussex County School Boards Association  
 Delegate: Jennifer Kraft  
 Alternate: Darrick Franek
2. Delegate and Alternate to the New Jersey School Boards Association  
 Delegate: Cheryl Williver  
 Alternate: Margaret Frey
3. Committees/Chairpersons-Forms handed out, please return to Board President.

## BOARD MEMBER TRAINING

Training required for BOE Members: Registration is completed through Mrs. Metzgar.

Dennis DeGroat- None  
Darrick Franek- Governance IV  
Margaret Frey-Governance IV  
Krista Galante – None  
Jennifer Kraft- None  
Karen Thibault-None  
Amy Valeich-Governance IV  
Christine Voris-Governance IV  
Cheryl Williver- Governance IV

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

*This public session is designed for members of the public to speak on items for Board consideration. By law, the Board of Education is under no obligation to respond to public comment. If the Board of Education chooses to respond, it does not waive its right thereafter not to respond. Members of the public are asked to state their name and address for the record. \*\*\*Members of the public are requested to keep their comments to a maximum of 5 minutes. \*\**

Cody Castner- 929 Fairview Lake Road- Mr. Castner addressed the school board, congratulating them and the staff for being one of the top-performing elementary schools in the state. He urged board members to actively engage and reflect on their commitment when joining the board. Highlighting his family's deep roots in Stillwater and generational ties to the school, he expressed concerns about issues he feels conflict with the school's values. He raised safety concerns regarding public transportation, citing incidents involving bus drivers from other districts. He emphasized the need for mental health requirements.

Additionally, he questioned the school's opt-out program. Dr. Kochis stated that the opt out program is specifically regarding health curriculum topics. Mr. Castner acknowledged parents' ability to opt their children out of specific lessons in the Health Curriculum. However, he expressed concern about his children, and others, being exposed to individuals who share the ideology from the specific health lessons. He stated he met with legislators to discuss stricter regulations on mental health for bus drivers. He concluded stating the community demands the board take action and put this on the table for discussion.

President Galante read the following statement: The Board is not permitted to discuss personnel and individuals in public; and discriminatory comments not only create legal concerns for the District, but may create personal liability for the public participant. We respectfully request that you refrain from these types of comments during public participation with these comments. Please contact the Superintendent's office if you have any questions.

## ADJOURN

Motion made by Mr. DeGroat, second by Mrs. Williver to adjourn at 7:21 pm. A voice vote was taken and unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,



René Metzgar

Business Administrator/Board Secretary