

**MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING**

October 2, 2017 – 6:11 p.m.
Administrative Offices

Presiding: Comm. Christopher Irving, President

Present:
Ms. Susana Peron, Acting Deputy Superintendent

*Comm. Emanuel Capers
Comm. Oshin Castillo
Comm. Chrystal Cleaves, Vice President
Comm. Jonathan Hodges

Comm. Manuel Martinez
Comm. Nakima Redmon
Comm. Flavio Rivera

Absent:
Comm. Lilisa Mimms

The Salute to the Flag was led by Comm. Irving.

Comm. Martinez read the Open Public Meetings Act:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of, and to attend the meetings of the Paterson Public School District, as well as other public bodies at which any business affecting the interest of the public is discussed or acted upon.

In accordance with the provisions of this law, the Paterson Public School District has caused notice of this meeting:

**Special Meeting
October 2, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.
Administrative Offices
90 Delaware Avenue
Paterson, New Jersey**

to be published by having the date, time and place posted in the office of the City Clerk of the City of Paterson, at the entrance of the Paterson Public School offices, on the district's website, and by sending notice of the meeting to the Arab Voice, El Diario, the Italian Voice, the North Jersey Herald & News, and The Record.

Comm. Irving: I want to welcome everyone this evening for the opportunity to hear from the two firms that will be presenting this evening to vie for the opportunity to shepherd this Board through the search for our next chief school administrator. I do want to put on the record that the current Acting Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Shafer, has decided to recuse herself from the conversation this evening in light of the fact that she intends to apply. Just for the purposes of transparency and to keep a firewall, she felt it was appropriate for her not to be present. She has removed herself from the process. As you all know, the administrator and support for the process will be Ms. Peron. She has done so and will continue to do so any time we convene to discuss anything relative

to the superintendent search. With that said, I want to just share with the Board this process is in line and in lock step with the timeline that the Board has established. We are moving swiftly, expeditiously, but also very responsibly in accordance to the timeline the Board adopted and moved forward with. As such, the Board procured and submitted RFP's for a search firm for the superintendent search. As such, the two finalists are Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates and Ray and Associates. The representatives from Hazard & Young will come forth and do a 20-minute presentation or less. We will have plenty of time for discussion afterward. I want our conversation to be a dialogue as we finish. After Hazard & Young has concluded with their presentation, we will then invite the folks from Ray & Associates in to do their presentation. Hazard & Young will leave and upon the leaving of both entities the Board will engage in the discussion. Before then, we will do the public comments for the search firm to allow folks in the public to share their thoughts and opinions as well. With that said, I'd like to introduce Mr. Ferdinand, who is representing the DOE as the Commissioner's liaison, and Dr. Mike Osnato, the Board's liaison to the state. I don't know if you gentlemen want to share anything for the record about the search process. The only caveat is if you do, you have to come to one of the microphones because it has to be heard on the record. Are there any questions from the Board before we begin?

PRESENTATION BY THE FIRMS ON THEIR PROPOSAL FOR SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates

Mr. Dwight Pfennig: Thank you so much. We are deeply appreciative that we were one of the two firms selected to present to you tonight. What I'm going to be working off of for my presentation is the copy of the PowerPoint that we handed out. It has some of the data that was in the original proposal, but it also shortens that up a little bit. I'm here as the senior associate. That means I'm the oldest of the group. I've done a few more searches than the others with HYA. I'm a former school superintendent in New Jersey and in Pennsylvania. I'm former deputy commissioner in the State of New Jersey during the McGreevy administration and I also did a short stint as an assistant professor at SUNY Cortland up in New York State in the educational leadership department. I've been a teacher all through my life in New Jersey as an educator, except for the stint in Pennsylvania. I'll let the other two associates introduce themselves and tell you a little bit about them and then we will move on.

Ms. Monica Browne: Good evening. My name is Monica Browne. I just retired after nine years as superintendent in Upper Saddle River in Bergen County, New Jersey. I retired after 25 years in New Jersey as a teacher and an administrator in Passaic, Monmouth, and Bergen Counties. I'm very happy to be here this evening.

Comm. Irving: We're happy to have you.

Mr. Milton James: My name is Milt James. I retired after 40 years, 33 years in New Jersey and seven years in Pennsylvania in the Pocono Mountain School District. I started in 1972 in Plainfield High School. After that I had several positions as coach, physical education teacher, department chair, athletic director, guidance counselor, and vice principal. I moved on to Hillside High School. I was there for 20 years as principal. After Hillside High School, I moved on to the Pocono Mountain School District. Thank you and I hope you have a good evening.

Comm. Irving: Thank you so much.

Mr. Pfennig: I'm flipping the page now to take a look at the heading that says "Great School Leaders Focus on What Matters - Student Outcomes, Organizational Culture, and Fiscal Responsibility." What we put in there is a catchall because of the things we've been reading about your district in the paper, building upon what has worked and the vision for Paterson. The catchphrase that you use is something we think is an effective one, Together We Can. HYA has 1,200 searches now and probably close to 1,400. We have about 120 associates active nationwide, but there are probably another 80 or so that do some searches or lend their hand in terms of providing us with tips on candidates nationwide. I've not been to Chamburg, Illinois when it used to be outside of Chicago. There's a full back end office that we have. They print the materials that you see. They help us coordinate surveys and the like. Most associates don't work out of Chamburg because they're more localized in the Tri-State or eastern part of the country or wherever they may be. I've been doing a number of searches recently in New Jersey. I've been in Manchester, New Hampshire, Stamford, Connecticut, and some in New York, including Valhalla, which is a small district. Some were cities and some were very small. We think the difference with HYA is we have a national reach in terms of recruiting and things we can do that way, as well as a great local focus. You have three people here who have experience in New Jersey and there may be a number of people that view that all kinds of ways depending on where our experience was, but also what our experience has been in hiring people over a period of years. We are a research-based process in terms of the development of our community survey. We do engage the community. When we talk about the steps of engaging a community, we will also like to address some of the things that we've read about that may be happening in Paterson. We believe in executive oversight of the search and executive due diligence, meaning that we use a firm called Baker & Eubanks. You've read that in the proposal. They will do the final check, which is one that takes in the internet and also the news media and social media. In addition, we do a number of pre-checks along the way for the background of candidates based on what we know, as you may gather, from Google sources, deeper Google sources, references that are provided by the candidates, and also the associates that we have nationwide who are out there working and may have dealt with some of the candidates previously. The next page has the heading on it that looks like that. It's Paterson Public Schools sample Board Portal. Once we start gathering information, including if we were successful this evening and we had a letter of engagement, we begin to put things on the portal so that you can reach those things more easily than handing out tons of paper along the way. The portal also outlines the five phases of the search, which I'm going to go through briefly. The first one is the engaging phase. That's where we do planning. We conduct a survey about the district. We conduct interviews and focus groups. Then we gather that information and present a leadership profile to you. We think we're aware that there have been some groups gathering information already in Paterson. We think that's critical. In some searches that we've done there have been groups that are active gathering information either prior to search or while it was going on. Any sources we list there are off the internet. Whether they're active or not, we don't know that. We would take the input that they have provided as well as input we would gather meeting with focus groups that you select and create the leadership profile. The leadership profile is created to guide the search along the way and find candidates who match that profile. We do like to have community forums. The forums that we would meet with are the groups that you would select. Again, that would be up to you. That would be done at the planning meeting and we meet with people individually. We try to meet with Board members individually. Then we meet with groups as well or any other individuals you think we should meet with. During the recruiting phase we go through advertising. We go through proactive recruitment. We talk about that when we talk about the advertising services, which are part of the other booklet that was handed out to you in the proposal. That's reaching out

through, not only venues like Education Week and Tri-State venues, but also dealing with the Association of Latino Administrators and the National Association of Black School Administrators. Those are some of the areas we use and we would certainly be open to any other advertising places the Board would like to go. We do the initial screening we have. Sometimes that can be modified if a board wants to modify that process and present you with a slate of candidates, the number of your choosing. You have certain candidates in the proposal of certain numbers along the way. We would do the initial screening for that. When we screen candidates, we make sure they match the leadership profile and we make sure that they appear to be from everything we can gather and all the resources we have a good fit for Paterson. The first question that usually comes up from the board is, what about the ones that you don't put forward to us? What happens to them? If we didn't think they match the profile, we would still let you know who they were confidentially usually by application number. If you said these people have these qualifications and we think they should move forward, then we would bring them forward to you and let you know more information about them. We do that screening, the initial interviewing, and the reference check. Again, in the selection phase we present the slate. We're here to facilitate board interviews and discussion if you would like us to. Some boards choose to do that and some don't. When we say facilitating, that usually includes helping you develop some questions for that particular process. Obviously, we have a lot of sample questions, but then we make a lot particular to Paterson. The key to facilitation is usually after the interviews. If we can be of assistance to the Board in trying to get you to reach consensus about candidates who will move forward, why or why not, people who are still in the process, and the like. Of course, we perform the background checks at that stage of the process. The transition phase is something we do if the board chooses. That's not part of the search phase, but sometimes it can be beneficial. We meet with the appointed superintendent and the board. We help support the transition. We may do governance workshops or whatever you felt was necessary. We do goal-setting and evaluations and strategic planning. You may have some of those things in place and not choose that as a service you'd like to go through. We then set up governance dashboards. You can work with the new superintendent in that manner. The next page looks like this. This is the chart that sums up everything I've been going through in terms of timelines for the number of weeks it normally takes to do such a search. I'm not going to go over every detail of that, but if you look at the page that follows we also came up with a tentative calendar for the search, trying to meet your desire to get it done in the early spring for the best we can do. That calendar is totally flexible. That's based on an estimate of how long we thought it would take to go through each of the phases, including the initial advertising, the planning meeting, and doing all the interview processes along the way. Finally, the fee structure is at the end. That matches what was submitted to you. The advertisement package is outlined there. Package #3 was in the proposal, as I just stated to you. If you want to do additional advertising, that would be an additional fee. There's a Northeast Ed package that goes into New York State, Connecticut, and NJASA as well. The due diligence services that I mentioned, some boards will do one candidate. Some of the larger districts do more than one. The \$5,800 that's listed there is for three. You may wish to do two or one. Baker Eubanks does that. It does the social media and news media check, but it also does what amounts to a credit financial check. The last thing in the world anybody would want would be people running school districts of such a magnitude and so many dollars floating around not to be very financially responsible. For printing and postage, we put zero in there, but that's up to you on the use of the portal. We try to go green, as it were, and not do so much paper. We also realize there are a lot people who want to see the paper in front of them. The consultant travel expenses there are listed as \$3,000. On the next page there is a candidate travel expenses. That's going to be up to the board on how they finalize that amount of money and how they want to do the particular interviews they do. There is

electronic media you can do now in some initial interviews. Oftentimes, people want to have the face-to-face usually in the later stages. That's for eight semi-finalists in the first round, five in the second round, and three in the third round. We said 16 trips averaging \$1,200. If you opt for the board governance workshop, the fees are there. Those are things that you have a long time to decide about throughout the search and when you get near the end of the search. That's the short version. We are certainly open to try to answer any questions you have.

Comm. Irving: At this stage, we will take any questions. One clarification which is something that was of interest to our search committee when we were evaluating the proposals is not mentioned here but I know you all had it in your initial proposal. I'm sure if I bring it up you'll mention it. I was really intrigued by the fact that you all had language in your presentation that if the superintendent we hire doesn't work out, if he leaves within a year, you will come back and conduct a search at no charge to the district. Can you tell me what that rubric consists of and what terms you do that in?

Mr. Pfennig: For the first year if the superintendent leaves for any reason, whether that's your choosing, the superintendent's choosing, or whatever else may happen, HYA would come back and do the search again. It would be no additional charge other than expenses perhaps. The second thing is, after two years if the Board remains substantially the same, the same guarantee is in effect. We say that because sometimes after two years you can have a marked change on a board, no matter where the boards are. Whether it be in small places or large places, sometimes there may be a reason for the superintendent to leave because of that board change. Right now, those are the guarantees. Has it ever happened? It's happened a couple of ways, after one year, for varying reasons. We had one that I did and it's public knowledge up in New York where we had the superintendent selected. We went through the public presentation with two candidates. They picked one. They were in contract talks and he said no. We had to go back and do that one again. Those things do happen on occasion. It's very rare. We have a rather large percentage, up in the 1990's, of people who serve out their first contract and it's probably just below that for people who stay five years. We also have as part of that guarantee that we're not going to approach people. If we have someone who is very successful in Paterson, we don't approach them before five years without board permission and without the candidate telling you or the superintendent at that point what they want to do. We don't go back and pull somebody out and rotate people around after three years.

Comm. Irving: Thank you. Are there any other questions? Really! How do you all handle working with internal candidates? It is very clear that our current acting superintendent of schools does indeed plan to apply and I think the Board is unified in the sense of granting that request. That's sure within her confines to do so. Also, in the interest of fairness and equity and keeping those firewalls up, what is your experience in dealing with internal candidates and how boards maintain the structural integrity of the process?

Mr. Pfennig: If you choose HYA, you've chosen a process. It's always been my opinion in the way we've operated in all of our searches that we do talk to the board if there are any internal candidates. You've let us know that. If we are the successful firm, we would say that candidate follows the process. That's what we do. It's the same process as everyone else.

Comm. Irving: Thank you.

Comm. Cleaves: Can you tell us what your success rate is in dealing with urban districts?

Mr. Pfennig: I don't have a percentage figure, but HYA has been involved in a number. You can see a number of districts listed in the information that we provided for you. HYA has been successful in urban areas. I would have to get back to you with the number of years that people served in those positions. Urban superintendencies don't tend to be very lengthy, but some have been very successful and most have made it the length of the contract. When you talk about ones that I have done in Stamford, Connecticut, Manchester, New Hampshire, and Providence, Long Island, they were all very different kinds of searches and all of those people are still in place. They've been done within the last three years. In all the places, with the exception of Providence, they had their own public issues going on that they needed to solve.

Comm. Redmon: What publications do you advertise in besides the ones listed here?

Mr. Pfennig: Those would be the ones where we would be. In addition, there are some now that other advertising online picks up. They will pick up off other venues. The ones that are listed here are the ones that we use. The degree to which they're showcased in Education Week – and most educators look at Education Week – depends on what you look at in the ad. Some are single ads and some are part of a group ad. The \$5,000 package makes it more single. Also, online now in Education Week there are very thorough, detailed advertisements in there too.

Comm. Redmon: How long do you run the advertisements?

Mr. Pfennig: The advertisement for Education Week now, if you go online, runs for the duration of the search. As long as HYA is involved we work together. Their page comes up every two weeks. It stays on pretty much for 30-60 days. We can extend that. That's not a huge deal with Education Week. The other ones may have terms, but they tend to be longer, the associations.

Comm. Martinez: On the same slide under fee structure, can you help me understand a little bit? I'm trying to understand why the separation of due diligence services. You said that's the conducting of the background checks. I would imagine that would have been included in the fee that we're paying you. Why is that a separate line?

Mr. Pfennig: Because that's a separate agency that we use. We have not included that in any searches for two reasons. Number one, it is separate from what we do in terms of the checks. Also, some boards will do one, two, or three. Most districts that are lower than 6,000 students will do one. Once you get higher than that, then they do two. Some of the urban areas may do three. I know some that have done three and it's a separate fee. They charge that to HYA and we've billed it that way because we also want to give an opportunity for the board to say how many they want to do. If you wanted us to total it in there, we certainly would.

Comm. Martinez: You provided some clarity. I would have assumed that would fall under your purview and lumped into that or incorporated into the work you guys would have done. I understand it a little bit better. On the engagement phase you talked about conducting the forums and gathering some information. Give me a little bit of an idea of your approach for getting the word out to the public and gathering folks to come to these forums. What kind of information have you or will you be gathering from those forums in your general research of the district and its needs?

Mr. Pfennig: We let you guide us in the district. We don't know Paterson that well in terms of neighborhoods and leaders that you want to have participate and in terms of what the focus group might entail. We would like to have a district liaison work with us, not only for you to identify the groups and get a hold of those people, but also for places to meet and scheduling them. We basically ask three questions and we can expand that if the Board would like to, but it's worked well for us. Number one, what's working in Paterson? What are the things that people are proud of? Why do they like Paterson? What are the things they would like to see continue? The second piece is, what are the most pressing issues in Paterson? We go through those. Third, what are the characteristics you'd like to see in a superintendent? Granted, sometimes people bring up something they're proud of and it's an issue to maintain it and they'd like to have the persons with the characteristics to do it. Sometimes there is some overlap in those, but we stay with those three things. We try not to get into the argument about who should be superintendent. We don't like this or that program. Get rid of it. We don't get into the editorials on what should be gotten rid of or things like that. If people mention programs that are troublesome, that will come in that middle column and we report that out. It's really their input meetings. We listen and take a lot of notes and use that to construct a leadership profile.

Comm. Castillo: Are the surveys done just in English?

Mr. Pfennig: It's done in English and Spanish. If you'd like more languages, they do charge a fee for that. I don't see that as an issue. I think you can get it in as many languages as you'd like. English and Spanish automatically, but from there you'd have to be our guide.

Comm. Irving: Is there anything else? Thank you.

Mr. Pfennig: Thank you for having us.

Comm. Irving: As they transition out, can someone grab the folks from Ray & Associates in the waiting area? We'll have the folks from Ray & Associates do their presentation and then we will have public comments and discussion. When we're done with the meeting, we have lots of food left over. Anybody in the audience who wants to join us for dinner, you're more than welcome to.

*Comm. Capers enters the meeting.

Ray & Associates, Inc.

Mr. Michael Rush: Good evening, Board members. I can understand that because we were in Virginia a couple of weeks ago and the board members there make \$30,000 to \$40,000 a year. In Milwaukee they make more than \$60,000 a year. I was a board member in New Jersey, so I'm on your side. If you move, let me know. I'm going to try to move, too. Anyway, my name is Mike Rush. First of all, thanks for allowing us to stand before you tonight and do a presentation for what will be the most important job that you as board members will do. Let me give you a little bit about myself. I'm originally from North Carolina. I've been in New Jersey since after college, which was 1969. I was a teacher, principal, and superintendent. I was assistant commissioner for five and a half years. I stopped my career as deputy superintendent in Paterson Public Schools. I did that for three years. After that, I went to New York and did some things there for a couple of years and retired. I have a mentoring program for 37 years called Omega 13. I'm proud to say that about 75% of my boys have graduated college and are doing extremely well. That's like my second job. I've been with Ray & Associates

since 2009 after I left Paterson. I've enjoyed every moment of it. With that, I'm going to move into the presentation because I don't want to take too much time. We know that we have 20 minutes total. Is that correct? We should stick to that time. We are Ray & Associates. I'm going to talk about what sets us apart. We've been in operation since 1975. We've been one owner and we're proud of that. We've done a lot of jobs. We have over 170 associates across the country. We have lots of experience. We recruit on a national level. When you hire Ray & Associates you're looking for a national search. I'll remind you that this is your search, not our search. You will select the superintendent. Our job is to bring you good, qualified, and certified people so you as a Board can make an informed decision. At the end, it's the Board of Education's responsibility to hire the right people, not us. Joe is going to talk about the association continuity.

Mr. Dale Caldwell: I'm Dale Caldwell. I had an opportunity to be the School Board Member of the Year in 2009. I have over 18 years of experience in school board certification for superintendent. One of the things I want to talk about is Ray & Associates. I'm one of the associates. As many of you know, I do a number of things here. We have literally over 100 associates. We're the largest superintendent search firm in the country. I'm helping to lead a search in Lynchburg, Virginia now. We're working in Teaneck and a few other places around the country. That's critical as you're looking for a superintendent because what we do is use the associates to reach out to people across the country. We have a very defined process. Gary has been doing this for 45 years. There's a very clear process. This is the Board's search and our goal is to empower the Board to make the decision that you think is best for the district in the long run. Our focus is on diversity. We have a very intentionally diverse group of associates that actually help to look at the search. That's critical in this day and age. That's critical for Paterson. That's critical for every school district. One of the things you'll find is that we will be able to get a larger pool of candidates because of our national reach. We just did Detroit and Hawaii. I couldn't get on the Hawaii search, but I wanted to do that one. That is critically important because you need to have as broad a range of candidates as possible.

Mr. Rush: The process of utmost importance. We will interview each of you individual. The reason we do it individually is because we want your individual input in what you're looking for in terms of the qualities and characteristics of the superintendent. Once we've done you, it's up to you if you'd like to have a group of community forums called constituent meetings. If you decide to do this, you decide how many groups you'd like for us to meet with. It could be one or two days depending. We have done them starting at 8:00 in the morning to 8:00 at night. We've done 15-20 depending on what the Board wants most. We're looking at nine of ten groups depending on the size of your district. We both will do it, but if we need more people because of the number of people you have that you want us to see, then we will make sure we bring other associates. We will be the main two on this search, but if other people are needed, we will make sure we bring them in. Then we will recruit. Once we have the input of individual Board members, then we will do the stakeholder groups. Normally there are 8-10 groups that we meet with. It could be your teaching staff, administrative staff, the NAACP, or any kind of community groups. Sometimes you have city officials and other people to meet with us separately. Once we've gotten all this data, we will collect it and collate it at our office. From that we will develop a profile. Once we build a profile, the Board will have to approve it. On one side of the profile will be district information. On the other side will be information about the characteristics you're looking for in a superintendent. This will go out to our 170 associates. At the first meeting, the Board will decide if and where they'd like to advertise. Advertisement comes to a cost of maybe \$4,000 or \$5,000 depending on who you select. Again, this is a national search

and this is a good time because we also go to conventions. Dale and I will be at NJSB. We will also be at NAPSE in November. We will also be at AASA. We will be at those conventions. Depending on the timeframe, we will be able to select and talk to people about who you're looking for. As soon as this goes out to the public, the community will know nationally who you guys are looking for. Some will call us. By the way, we don't have anybody in mind for this search. I do remind you that the search can be in-house and out-house. In other words, if there are people from the district who would like to apply, as long as they have the certifications and the qualifications they are allowed. We say to the Board we would like for them to go through the same rigorous process as anyone else. Our process is open, honest, and transparent. But it means if you have somebody in mind one of the questions we will ask each of you and at the community forums we will have is if you know somebody who may be interested, it's okay if you give us their names. It's not anything hidden. If you want to see somebody, one of us will contact that person and say, "your name was mentioned by a person, but you may want to apply." We won't mention the person. We will make it clear they go through the same rigorous process as everyone else. Stakeholder meetings are very key and important because we will ask each of the stakeholder groups nine basic questions. One of those questions will be what I just said, if you have any names of people that you'd like to recommend. We'll ask the groups those questions. We will ask them what they're looking for, what characteristics in a superintendent. We have online 30 characteristics. It will be on your website, but it will go to us. We will try to have as many people as possible complete those surveys. It's done online. We collate those and get it back to you. They normally have 12-15 characteristics that you are looking for. This is why we don't have anybody in mind, because it's up to you. Once we've done that, we will make sure that's out. The Board determines the profile. We make sure that we contact our associates and say Paterson Public Schools is looking for a superintendent. Here's the profile. Here's the flyer that they will get. They will contact people they know and ask if they're interested to contact us. We have a very dynamic office in Cedar Rapids, Iowa who is on top of everything. Once you get the profile and all the characteristics, they put it together in two or three days and have it back to you. We develop a timeline with you. In other words, you say when you want this person in place. Based on the suggested timeline, you may want this person to start in July 2018. If that's the case, then we will want somebody hired by November because most superintendents are given 60-90 days. We're looking for people who have jobs. We're not looking to bring anybody here who lost their job last year and wants to move around. The person has to be gainfully employed. We will bring them to you. One thing I need to let you know is that you will see every application. If somebody said they applied, you will see every application. We will say to the ones we think should come to the top. Once we narrow it down, we will do one-way videos. The one-way video will suggest to you a profile of a person you may want to interview. Then we do a score matrix that will allow you to look at each candidate and see how many of those you'd like to bring forward. Sometimes they like to bring 6, 8, or 10 forward. Then you'll have face-to-face interviews. We also can assist you with developing questions. We will screen the candidates. In other words, we will do background checks. We don't want to be embarrassed and we don't want you to be embarrassed. We will make sure we screen all to the candidates and make sure they're the people that we say okay. We do have a two-year guarantee. If for any reason the superintendent happens to leave within two years of signing the contract, we come back and we will do the search for expenses only. The expenses we incur. No one has to fly here. I live an hour and fifteen minutes away. I also have a condo in Paterson that I've had since 2006. Dale lives in New Brunswick. The little bit of money that you will spend on us coming here is minimal. It's better than having somebody flying in from Arizona or wherever they're going to fly from. We do the criminal history background checks. We will go on Google and find out everything we can. We say to the Board for an extra \$200 if that person becomes a

finalist we will do the criminal history background check. If it's somebody you don't know and are not familiar with, we suggest you do that. We may not be able to find out everything. Once you bring the person in, I think that's key. The background check will tell us if that person has filed bankruptcy and all those kinds of things, which is not criminal. The criminal history background check is something that you guys will pay a fee for, and it's only \$200. Sometimes boards decide themselves to do that. You guys will decide on the candidates you want to bring forward. Normally, you narrow them down to 6, 4, and then 2. Sometimes boards decide if they want to spend the money to go visit the candidate. You can go visit the candidate to see if that's the person that you want. One thing about our firm is that our candidates last for quite a while. Most candidates in urban areas last three to five years, but in our case, we have a record of good candidates being with the district at least eight years. That's a plus. Whether you hire Ray & Associates or any other search firm, I suggest you research the firms that you have. Research people and make sure that it's a person you want to do the job. This is a very important job and we want to make sure if Ray & Associates has the job we're going to do the best we can to bring you good people. We will help you transition. If you want us to help you with the contract, we will. We also will be in touch. Everybody we place, Dale or I will be in touch at least every month or six weeks just to say how is it going. We also keep in touch with the Board President. That's part of our guarantee, making sure you guys are successful. If the person leaves, we will come back and do it not for cost. All the facts that are presented today allow our firm to provide you with a proven process. Again, we've been doing this a long time. I'm confident that we can do the job to bring you good people so you guys can make an informed decision.

Mr. Caldwell: One other thing that's important that seems to come up in these searches is that some firms will place somebody and then place them somewhere else in three years. We make a guarantee to you we don't do that. It's about the long-term relationship. That's critical.

Mr. Rush: We won't steal somebody for you and take them someplace else. It's good for you guys to know that your person will hopefully be here at least eight years if you guys want him. Other than that, we can take whatever questions you have. I think our time is about 17 minutes.

Comm. Irving: The other firm was expeditious, too. We appreciate it. Are there any questions for Mr. Rush or Mr. Caldwell? The only question was regarding the incurred costs. When you look at the RFP and the budget that you all have, the only thing I didn't see was the cost it would be to bring the candidates on site. What is the average cost?

Mr. Rush: That is up to you. You can save money by doing Skype, but you don't want to do that when you have two or three finalists. If the person comes from California, naturally that's going to cost more than a person coming from Washington, D.C. That will determine it. Some boards decide they can't afford it and they tell the candidate upfront. They may pay part of their expenses for hotels, but they can't afford to fly them in. That's up to the board. We will work with you on that. If that's the case, we try to find the cheapest flights. This is why the process is such that if you have candidates you try to give at least 14 days. Flights are cheaper for 14 days than they are for seven days. This is a national search, so you may get people from California or Florida.

Comm. Irving: Are there any other questions?

Comm. Martinez: You guys mentioned that you're currently working with Teaneck and others. Are there any other districts in North Jersey or the region that you're also working with? I ask that for clarity in the sense that if you're working for Teaneck and other districts what's to say that you won't send some of the better candidates to other places and we might get the short end of that?

Mr. Rush: That's a very good question. The only district we're currently working with in New Jersey is Teaneck. Teaneck has been in the reach for maybe seven to eight months. They had finalists and they didn't like either of them. By the way, it's not over until a contract is signed. We were hoping to finish Teaneck three months ago. It didn't go as well as we expected, so we opened the search and continued to search. Again, it won't be over until the contract is signed.

Comm. Capers: Do you work with East Orange as well?

Mr. Rush: We finished East Orange and Trenton. Those are the latest searches we did. We did Trenton, New Jersey, East Orange and Teaneck at the same time. We did Greenwich and Bridgeport, Connecticut. Those are the current searches we've done. We've done searches in Florida as large as 150,000 students and as low as 3,000 students.

Comm. Capers: On this list that you provided here it says recent urban district searches. You conducted searches in 2014, 2015, and 2017. Is this a mistake? What happened in 2016? There's nothing here in 2016.

Mr. Rush: It depends on when the search started. I will take a look at that, but we did searches in 2016. I think we started East Orange in 2016. I will take a look at that. That could have been a typographical error. We did do searches in 2016. Since I've been there, I've done searches every year. I'll take a look at that.

Comm. Irving: Are there any other questions?

Comm. Martinez: Under estimated search costs, this doesn't include estimated advertising? Who would you be advertising to? What mediums would you be using?

Mr. Rush: Most schools use AASA, which is the largest advertising agency. That cost is pretty expensive. They also use Education Week. Those are the places we advertise. If we get the search, in the first meeting is when we go over the entire thing in terms of what it could cost you and what it may cost you. We try to spend your money the way we spend ours. In other words, we won't just spend your money because it's yours. We look at everything.

Comm. Martinez: Roughly speaking, just a ball park figure of what we expect that cost to be in advertising.

Mr. Rush: \$3,000 to \$4,000. In some places we're going to suggest you not advertise. For example, you may want to do Education Week. You can also send a flyer to AASA, which doesn't cost as much. The fact that you're doing it now allows us to go to NAPSE and New Jersey School Boards to see people there instead of you paying for additional advertising. We don't do Star Ledger or New York Times because people don't look in those papers. That's a waste of money.

Comm. Martinez: Okay, sounds familiar. I've heard that before.

Comm. Cleaves: For the record, Comm. Capers asked about 2016. If you go to page 24 it gives you the searches within the last five years and it has them all listed. 2016 is in there.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Castillo that the Public Comments portion of the meeting be opened. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

Mr. Corey Teague: Good evening, Commissioners. Again, I want to make sure I put it on the record that I do enjoy working with Superintendent Shafer and Deputy Superintendent Susana Peron. I've made that clear plenty of times. You know who I am. I'm just a little shaky about how the process is going. That's why I was here tonight. There are a lot of folks who get on social media and they rant and rave, but when it comes time to actually sit and hear it, they're never here. I'm here. I don't have to go into that whole spiel you guys know. I'm just here to see what the process is all about. You know me. I'm an activist for the kids. I want to make sure they have the best shot. That's why I'm here. It's not a personal attack on anybody. City Hall seems to think it was. I'm just here to make sure. At least you can say that I show up. I don't just sit on the computer and write stuff. I'm here when it's time to have discussions. I'm glad to hear what was discussed tonight. I did hear one of the firms mention that if you pick one superintendent, or something of that nature. I did hear the first firm say that. I don't know how that would work. On a personal note, I enjoy working with Ms. Shafer. I've been very upfront with that. She gets back to me as fast as she can. I still have some issues with the way the process is, but I'm learning. I'm sitting here listening and observing, but I do want to make it emphatically clear that I do like working with Ms. Shafer and Ms. Peron as an activist in the community and a parent. Thank you.

Comm. Irving: Ms. Grant, any comments or thoughts about what you heard tonight?

Ms. Rosie Grant: I have plenty of opportunities to share my opinion, so I decided I would just come to listen tonight.

Comm. Irving: Fair enough.

It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Castillo that the Public Comments portion of the meeting be closed. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

DISCUSSION ON THE PROPOSALS FOR SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH FIRM

Comm. Irving: Any thoughts relative to what has been presented this evening between HYA and Ray & Associates?

Comm. Hodges: I've been in five searches and this will be the sixth. I recognize that the search process must be beyond even the appearance of impropriety. Regrettably, I do not think that this search process has met that standard. I'm extremely disappointed with that, from the composition of the committee to certain activities that have taken place in the community. They've been all passed over. I'm not going to go through them here and now. I'll simply say that at this particular point in time I don't want to provide even the patina of credibility to it with my involvement. So, I intend to recuse myself from this any further.

Comm. Irving: Duly noted. Thank you. Are there any other comments relative to the search firms that are here? Are there any thoughts or opinions?

*Comm. Hodges leaves the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

Comm. Capers: What's the next process from here?

Comm. Irving: Tonight we will select the firm.

Comm. Capers: Are we voting?

Comm. Irving: Yes. We will select the firm tonight. Once we select the firm we will get into the negotiation for the contract for the firm and then their contract will come up if we can turn it around fast enough at the workshop meeting, if not at the regular meeting. Then that firm begins to do everything they just laid out in their proposal. I don't see the need to do the community forums thanks to PEF. I think they were very diligent and did a great job. We'll yield to the search committee to see if there are any constituency groups they may want to meet with in the interim. The goal would then be to advertise and hopefully have the interviews. I'm doing all this from memory. Hopefully, we will have the interviews, advertisements, and at least all the prospectuses in before the end of the year.

Comm. Capers: I think that we do need more community forums with whatever firm we choose so they understand the process. In the community everybody has their way of thinking on how the search process is going. Some people say it's compromised. Some people say it's already turned one way. I think we as a Board need to be more transparent on how this process is going. Whatever firm we select, they need to lay out how their selection process is going to work as well. I never agreed with the committee. I think you owe it to the community more to explain why the committee is in place and why you selected or approved those people that were on that list.

Comm. Irving: Fair enough.

Comm. Capers: We can probably do it in conjunction with other organizations, such as PEF or NAACP, so we as Board members do our due diligence.

Comm. Irving: I hear you and I think we have been more than transparent, to be quite frank with you. I have no problem if we have specific recommendations on places to go and people to see. I'm of the standpoint that I don't want anybody saying that this process is compromised whether they like it or not. Just because you disagree with the process doesn't mean that you get to take the ball and go home. I think that's the sad part. If you have specific recommendations on ways we can do it, tell me what you think and let's do it. I think the only way to be transparent is to be fully transparent. It's just to tell folks that here is where we are. We published it in the paper. We published it on the district website. We had the community forums with PEF.

Comm. Cleaves: Six of them.

Comm. Irving: I attended every single one of those forums. The ones I didn't attend, Chrystal attended. We also handed out all the notes from the forums. We published the list. I mean it sincerely, anything any of you all think that we can do to continue to make this process even more transparent. Maybe we can do monthly updates on the district website about where we are in the process.

Comm. Capers: Take, for example, the forum that was at School No. 6 that PEF did. The search committee list that they had was a new list that came out. Our community is not on top of it going to every forum. They're not informed. If they see this list at this one forum and then there's a whole new revised list that they weren't aware of, they start rambling and talking in the community that this is compromised. It wasn't a new list. It was a revised list.

Comm. Irving: Would it be helpful if we published monthly updates at the Board meetings, like a standing report?

Comm. Capers: I'm not saying that I'm excusing myself. I'm not blaming anybody. I'm just saying we need to be more transparent.

Comm. Cleaves: But I don't think it has to do with transparency.

Comm. Capers: We need to find another way on how to keep our community engaged throughout this whole process.

Comm. Irving: The only thing I ask is to just give me tangible ways to do it and I will do it. I think one tangible way to do it is a monthly written report on the status of the superintendent search publicizing that on the website. Are there other ways to do it? I'm game. You're not going to hear me complain about that.

Comm. Capers: We can host our own town hall. The search firm can do a presentation on how the process works so they're not only hearing it from you. Whatever search firm we select, they get to hear the same thing as well.

Comm. Cleaves: That's what tonight was for.

Comm. Irving: I think there's a fine line we have to walk between stunting our own growth, but also appeasing. We're not going to make everybody happy. That we get. But we can do the best we can to tell people and share with people what this process is. If we hire a firm and ask them to do two forums to make the public aware, that's what we're paying them to do. Send their behinds up there. I have no problem putting together a monthly report to do so. Let's continue to stick to it and move forward. Whoever we select asking them to do public forums makes sense.

Comm. Redmon: Comm. Capers, this is back at you. As Board members and as the district we did our due diligence by publicizing. It has been on the public access channel. It has been on our website. It has been printed. As our district, we have done our due diligence. We can't ask the public to be more engaged because if they wanted to be more engaged they would be here tonight. This notification went out. It was a public notice that went out. People knew about this Board meeting. As Commissioners we were more transparent than anything I've seen so far. If you had any questions for the search firm, this was your time to come here and question the search firms.

Comm. Irving: I don't want to pile up on what he said because he brings up a good point. Let's just do the best we can. No matter what we do, there are going to be those naysayers in the community that say we didn't do enough. In my soul, I know I want to just feel good to say we've done the best we can. I think if having the search firm host two forums – and Ms. Grant brought this up at our search committee meeting – having a standing report every single month that comes from either the firm or myself as the chair of the search, we can do so.

Comm. Capers: I think it should come from the firm.

Comm. Irving: I agree. Make sure we put that in the contract.

Comm. Cleaves: I would like to say that I believe the Board is doing a yeoman's job of making sure that what we're doing is being very transparent. I've attended the public sessions with Ms. Grant and she asked the same questions in every session and we got different answers to the same questions. If you were at one session and not another, and then you came to another session and heard the responses, some were similar but she did get some that were different. Someone would say that maybe the information is not the same. She presented the same information across the board, but it's how the persons that were in those meetings perceived whatever the question was. That was their interpretation of it, which was good. I think that Comm. Irving has stressed to the public about how the committee was formulated. Of course, you have some folks that don't agree with the way it was formulated and some folks do. But he explained it to us in a public meeting at Kennedy High School. We did get a full explanation in public after he presented the roster of committee members. Granted, we're going to always get people that want us to do a little more. But we have to always stop reacting to those people who don't show up and then after the fact want us to do something their way. We'll have those two open meetings and written information conducted by the firm and those same people still won't show up. Those same people that are running to you for you to bring the information to us will still not show up. At that point, what do we do? We're doing everything that everyone is asking of us, above and beyond. I just got back last night from a trip and I'm a little tired but I'm here because this is part of my job as a Commissioner to make sure that I'm in attendance so that my voice and my presence can be heard, known, and seen. If you're not around the table to be a part of the discussion, don't send it by messenger. I'm getting to a point where the silence that I usually have, enough already. I think we are doing everything that this community has asked of us to do when it comes to the superintendent search.

Comm. Irving: To that point, if we weren't, this place would be packed. I want to be objective about that. I watched a meeting the other night at which most of the people in this town were categorically opposed to what was going on and they came out and made it clear. I'm always sensitive to the fact that there are a handful of people in this town who will always complain about anything that we do primarily because I'm the one sitting here. If he were sitting here, it would be a completely different story.

Comm. Capers: I'm not saying the process is messed up.

Comm. Irving: It doesn't take away from what Comm. Capers is saying. I think we do the best we can to try to make people informed. End of story. If someone wants to have another forum, I'll have another one. I expressed an interest to go to the City Council meeting to explain the process and the Council President told me not to. She just felt it would be too contentious. She felt that the process we had laid out and the memo we submitted was enough. She did not want me getting into it with the other yahoos. Maybe we send the search firm.

Comm. Capers: That's what I'm saying. It doesn't have to come from you. Let's use the search firm that we are paying to do the job that they're willing to do. That's all I'm saying. Now the community is hearing from another outside objective voice on how the process is working. Maybe they feel some type of way about me or you on how information is presented because they're already coming in with a preset mind. If they're hearing from an outside source, that's all I'm saying.

Comm. Martinez: Those very same people who had an issue with the way the search committee was put together, can you imagine their complaints if the Board had done it? Either way we would have decided to do it, there would have been naysayers. Here's the one thing I can say, if you have nothing to hide, you hide nothing. We've hidden nothing. Everything has been completely above deck and transparent. The one thing we can control is the way we're giving the information out and we've done it. It's been all laid out. What we can't control is the way people receive it and the way they perceive it. If they're choosing to receive it and perceive it their way, we can't control that. It's been above deck. Again, the firms were here and this was notified. Look at how many people are out there. Is it that we're not getting the word out? Or is it that they're not coming here? We're doing our job. We're putting it out there. We're informing folks. If they choose not to come and complain thereafter, that's not going to stop us from doing what we have to do.

Comm. Irving: We're talking about the same thing. I want to make sure everybody hears it. I think we're all saying the same thing. We all recognize that there is an opportunity for the community to have a voice and we should help appease that. What I don't want to do is bend so far backwards I kiss my own butt. I think that's the dance we have to walk. I want to appease the community, not to appease five people who talk about it on social media. That's not what we're doing.

Comm. Capers: But there are some people that didn't even know the search committee was even going on. Not everybody gets the notices. Did we do everything we could? Did we do Robo-calls? Did we do everything to reach all 30,000 parents in our district? I'm not saying that this process was messed up. All I'm saying is let the search firm we hire be another objective voice so they're not hearing from me and you.

Comm. Irving: You just gave me another suggestion. As long as we can facilitate it, maybe we can send them a flyer.

Comm. Capers: At home or at the school - whatever it is.

Comm. Irving: The points you're making are great points and I want to be able to say if we're doing two more of these that we're inviting all parents to hear from the search firm about the process. It can't hurt.

Comm. Capers: Exactly.

Comm. Castillo: I completely agree we can do it all. But I think PEF did a wonderful job teaming up, not only as an organization in the city, but with every single council member from every single ward. We put it on Facebook. We called radio stations. I know I personally did. I attended the forums. A lot of the council people went house to house to give out the flyer. The parents did not show up to the forums. There were six different dates and times, same questions, same information. We didn't host it. PEF did, an organization that has worked with our community for a very long time, plus the City Council. It gets to a point of what else can we do? What is going to be different with the firm coming in and doing these discussions? We can go house to house, which some council members did. We can call radio stations. We can do Facebook. We can do Twitter. We did Instagram. What else can we possibly do in order to notify them and catch their interest? The question is nothing because a lot of the people know what's going on. Unfortunately, the ones that are not informed are the people that live here but don't really live here apparently. They live under a rock, and it happens in every town. Then you have the people that it doesn't matter if you have the search firm come and

give five presentations or if you have the president come and do five presentations. They're going to keep saying the same thing. I'm actually a little concerned because we were elected to do a job and if our voice doesn't count and if our voice isn't good enough, then we have a whole different situation. Can I call the question? Can we vote?

Comm. Irving: There's no motion on the floor, so we can't call the question. There are three very tangible suggestions on the floor that we can act upon. Upon the procurement of the search firm, they will conduct two additional forums and have monthly written reports to the Board on the status of the search. Lastly, in preparation for the two forums, we will hand flyers to every single child in the district to invite their parents.

Comm. Cleaves: We can get the Parent and Community Engagement Department involved. They know how to reach more parents.

Comm. Rivera: We're elected here by the people to make decisions on their behalf. You passed a comment that some people out there don't know what's going on because they're not involved. Many of my colleagues said the same. There are a lot of people here who don't know their Council members, Board members, or even their Mayor. We watched the Council meeting recently and depending what group and which people you pull from the ones that are involved know what is going on and what they want, but we cannot make everyone happy. We're here to make a decision for what's best for the community and the children. If you ask community members about the search committee, I don't think two people in thousands will have the same 14 members. We will never agree. To be more specific, if you ask people from the Latino community if they agree with the search committee, they're going to have some concerns because of the makeup. As long as we as Board members agree that this is the best search committee we can possibly have, then that's all we ask for. We cannot entertain hours and hours of conversation. We cannot make everybody happy, Mr. Capers. I just wanted to add that.

Comm. Irving: We have the two additional community forums and the monthly reports from the search firm. We will make sure we get the flyers out and conduct Robo-calls. After that...

Comm. Capers: You've done all you can do. That's all I'm saying.

Comm. Irving: Good enough. Let's get to the decision at hand. What are your thoughts? Who do you think we should go with? All the Board members received the email with the RFPs from the firms beforehand. The presentation tonight was just to formalize verbally what was sent. What are your thoughts and opinions?

Comm. Redmon: I think Ray & Associates' proposal and RFP was the more professional one that I saw.

It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Castillo that the Board approves awarding the superintendent search firm contract to Ray & Associates, Inc. for 2017-2018 academic year.

Comm. Martinez: Due to the presentation, the price points, and the layouts my mind is made up.

On roll call all members voted as follows:

Comm. Capers: Abstain.

Comm. Castillo: Yes.

Comm. Cleaves: Abstain.

Comm. Martinez: Yes.

Comm. Redmon: Yes.

Comm. Rivera: Yes.

Comm. Irving: Yes.

The motion carried.

It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Castillo that the meeting be adjourned. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 p.m.