



## **LIVINGSTON BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP/VOTING MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, February 13, 2023

Executive Session - Administration Building - 7:00 p.m.

Public Session - Hybrid Meeting - Administration Building - 7:30 p.m.

A **Workshop/Voting Meeting** of the Livingston Board of Education was held on this date in the large conference room in the Administration Building and via Zoom and Facebook Live. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vineeta Khanna, Board President, who announced that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by amendment to notice approved at the Board's reorganization meeting on January 3, 2023 and posted at the Board of Education office and communicated to *The Star Ledger*, *West Essex Tribune*, *TAPinto Livingston* and the Livingston Township Clerk.

Members Present: Jenissa Arnette, Pamela Chirls, Seth Cohen, Vineeta Khanna, Parul Khemka and Jeffrey Xu

Also in Attendance: Dr. Matthew Block, Michael Davison, Lisa Capone-Steiger, Mark Stern, and Joann Goldberg

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

### **Executive Session**

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

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

- Contract Matters and Personnel

Action may be taken upon return to the public session. The full length of the meeting is anticipated to be approximately 30 minutes and be it

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

Mr. Cohen seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khanna, Mrs. Khemka  
Nays - None

At 7:34 p.m., Mrs. Khanna reconvened the public meeting.

There were approximately 22 members of the public and staff watching in person and remotely through the webinar and a Facebook Live Stream.

## **Public Input on Agenda Items ~ up to 15 minutes**

There was no public input on agenda items.

### **Workshop Item**

#### 1. Budget Preview

Dr. Block announced that the full budget presentation, which will be provided at the February 28 meeting, will be aligned to the 2022-2027 strategic plan and district goals and that the board will see an investment in safety and wellness, teaching and learning, leadership and governance, community and culture and finance and facilities.

Mr. Davison explained the budget process, adding that State aid will not be announced until after February 28 so he will start the budget with a flat amount on that line. Mr. Davison continued by explaining we are allowed to increase the tax levy by 2% and can exceed that amount using a health benefit and an enrollment adjustment waiver in 2023-2024. Any increases we don't take advantage of will become banked cap for use in future years.

Dr. Block reviewed our immediate and long term facility space needs. Dr. Block explained a referendum takes several years so we are looking for short term solutions. One of the short term solutions is to purchase modular structures, which will be placed at one or two of our elementary schools, to use for offices and meeting spaces so that we can free up additional classroom space in the buildings for our students. Dr. Block added that the money to purchase these units would come out of our capital reserve budget and would not be part of the tax levy being put forward in our operational budget for next year.

Dr. Block then discussed creating a long range planning committee to work collaboratively on our long term needs. The committee would then provide their recommendations to the community.

The board asked when they will receive more specific information about the modular unit plan and Mr. Davison explained we are in the process of fine tuning what the needs will be and will provide them with the type of unit, number of them, size, placement and sample photos at the February 28 meeting.

There was further discussion that although the purchase of the modular units will be taken out of the capital reserve budget, recurring costs such as electric, plumbing and additional staffing for the open classrooms will be included in the operational budget.

Mr. Davison added we will also apply for projects that are eligible for ROD grants, explaining that we could receive 40% of the cost depending upon how many districts apply. Applications for ROD grants will be for items completed in the 2024-2025 budget.

The board members were all in favor of moving forward with the purchase of the modular units and bringing forth more detailed information on February 28th.

### **RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL**

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Mr. Cohen moved the following:

#### **5.1 HIB Report**

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

Mrs. Khemka seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khemka  
Abstain - Mrs. Khanna  
Nays - None

**Public Comment ~ up to 15 minutes**

There was no public comment.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:10 p.m. Mrs. Khanna asked for a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the superintendent's mid-year evaluation. No action will be taken and the board will not be returning to public session.

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Whereas**, N.J.S.A. 10:4-1 et seq., also known as the "Sunshine Law," authorizes a public body to meet in executive or private session under certain limited circumstances, and

**Whereas**, said law requires the Board to adopt a resolution at a public hearing before it can meet in such an executive or private session, now, therefore, be it

**Resolved**, by the Livingston Board of Education that:

- (A) It does hereby determine that it is necessary to meet in executive session on February 13, 2023 to discuss the matters stipulated, in conformance with the subsections of said act which are indicated.
  - 1. Matter rendered confidential by federal law, state statute or rule of court.
  - 2. Matter in which the release of information would impair a right to receive federal funds.
  - 3. Matter, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy unless the individual concerned shall request in writing that the same be disclosed publicly.
  - 4. Collective bargaining matter.
  - 5. Matter involving the purchase, lease or acquisition of real property with public funds, the setting of banking rates, etc. where it would adversely affect the public interest if discussion were disclosed.
  - 6. Tactics and techniques utilized in protecting public property where disclosure could impair protection.
  - 7. Investigation of violations or possible violations of law.
  - 8. Pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation other than collective bargaining agreement.
  - 9. Personnel matters unless the individual employees or appointees affected requested that such matter be discussed at a public meeting.
  - 10. Deliberations occurring after a public hearing that may result in the imposition of a specific civil penalty.
- (B) The matters discussed will be made public when confidentiality is no longer required and formal action pursuant to said discussion shall take place only at a meeting to which the public has been invited.
- (C) No action will be taken.

Mr. Cohen seconded the motion.

Vote all in favor.

**Respectfully submitted,**



**Michael Davison**  
**Board Secretary**

February 13, 2023