

**The Somerset Hills School District
Special Meeting Minutes - March 15, 2025
Budget Retreat - 8:00 A.M.
Bernards High School - Community Room**

I. Call to Order & Welcome

Mrs. Frenda called the meeting to order at 8:02.a.m.

II. Roll Call

Present:

Mr. Baker

Ms. Cooper

Ms. Gomez (arrived 8:10 a.m.)

Mrs. Hoppe

Mrs. Santoro

Mrs. Wry

Mrs. Frenda

Absent:

Ms. Ballard

Ms. Clark-Emery

Ms. Gils

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Agenda Questions

None

V. Public Comments

None

Seeing no one from the public, Mrs. Santoro moved to close public comments, Ms. Cooper seconded.

Public comments are welcome at this time on any topic. Please state your name and address. Comments are limited to three minutes. At three minutes you will be interrupted

and asked to pause to allow any other members of the public who would like to speak an opportunity to do so. An individual may return to the podium to complete their statement after everyone else has had an opportunity to speak for a total of two times at the podium. Please understand that our public forums are not structured as question and answer sessions, but are offered as opportunities to share your thoughts with the Board. In instances where the Board feels there is a misunderstanding or inaccuracy, the Board President or Superintendent may address the comment. In accordance with New Jersey Statute, the Board will not discuss matters regarding specific personnel. A reminder for all parties in attendance to remain respectful and that there should be no interaction between the speaker and the audience. No members of the audience should interfere with or interrupt a speaker's comments. Thank you in advance for your input.

VI. PERSONNEL

A. Action Items: #1 Mrs.Hoppe moved item #1 and Mrs. Wry seconded.

Item #1 was approved by a roll call vote of 6-0-0. Voting: Ayes: Baker, Cooper, Hoppe, Santoro, Wry, Frenda. Absent: Ballard, Clark-Emery, Gils, Gomez (arrived 8:10a.m.)

1. Approve Appointment Administrative Staff*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, and approval from the Somerset County Interim Executive County Superintendent of Schools dated February 24, 2025, approve the appointment of the following administrative staff for the 2024-2025 school year, *subject to further investigation pursuant to law:*

| | Name | School | Position | Salary | Replace | Effective |
|---|---------------------|---------------|--|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| a | Liguori, Richard | District | Business Administrator/Board Secretary ADM.DIST.BADM.NA.01 | \$155,000 | DeMarco | 4/1/25 |

VII. BUDGET RETREAT

FY 26 Budget Presentation - Dr. Brotschul, Dr. Butler, Mrs. Besold, Mrs. Vlietstra, and Ms. Koransky

VIII. BUSINESS OPERATIONS

A. Finance Action Items: #1-2 Mrs. Hoppe moved items #1-2 and Mr. Baker seconded.

Action items 1 and 2 were approved by a roll call vote of 7-0-0. Voting: Ayes: Baker, Cooper, Gomez, Hoppe, Santoro, Wry, Frenda. Absent: Ballard, Clark-Emery, Gils.

1. Approve Tentative 2025-2026 Budget*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education approves the 2025-2026 school year and that the Board Secretary be authorized to submit the following tentative budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline and to make all necessary adjustments to the budget to comply with State regulations.

| 2025-2026 | General Fund | Special Revenues | Debt Service | Total |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Total Expenditures | \$48,204,630 | \$848,217 | \$3,256,770 | \$52,309,617 |
| Less Anticipated Revenue | \$11,644,803 | \$848,217 | \$ 173,254 | \$12,666,274 |
| Taxes to be Raised | \$36,559,827 | \$ 0 | \$3,083,516 | \$39,643,343 |

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, in the County of Somerset, New Jersey, approves the following capital project and the withdrawal of

\$1,435.000 from the Capital Reserve account to provide funding for the following projects/equipment for the 2025-2026 school year:

Bernards High School PAC Audio Upgrade

Bernards High School PAC Curtain Replacement

Bernards High School Retaining Wall Replacement

Door Access Upgrade

Lighting Projects

Total costs for this project are \$1,435.000, which represent expenditures for construction elements or projects that are in addition to the facilities efficiency standards determined by the Commissioner as necessary to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. And to advertise said tentative budget in the Bernardsville News or Courier News in accordance with the form suggested by the State Department of Education and according to law.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, in the County of Somerset, New Jersey, approves the following capital project and the withdrawal of \$600,000 from the Maintenance Reserve account to provide funding for the following projects/equipment for the 2025-2026 school year:

Tennis Courts: Phase 1

Total costs for this project are \$600,000, which represent expenditures for construction elements or projects that are in addition to the facilities efficiency standards determined by the Commissioner as necessary to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. And to advertise said tentative budget in the Bernardsville News or Courier News in accordance with the form suggested by the State Department of Education and according to law.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the tentative budget the adjustment for

increased costs of health benefits in the amount of \$397,108. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increase in health benefit premiums.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a public hearing be held on April 30, 2025 at 7:30 pm for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2025-2026 School Year.

2. Approve Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement 2025-2026*

WHEREAS, the Somerset Hills Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23B:1.1 et. seq. requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

WHEREAS, a Board of Education may establish, for regular district business travel only, an annual school year threshold of \$150 per staff member where prior Board approval shall not be required unless this annual threshold for a staff member is exceeded in a given school year (July 1 through June 30); and

WHEREAS, travel and related expenses not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23B:1.1 et. seq. , but deemed by the Board of Education to be necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel, and Reimbursement Forms; now

BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves all travel not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 as being necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education includes in the tentative budget travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7, to a maximum expenditure of \$70,000, with \$21,824 expended as of March 1, 2025 for all staff and board members for the 2024-2025 school year.

The School Business Administrator/Board Secretary shall track and record these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Baker moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:03 a.m. Ms. Gomez seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,


Beverly Vlietstra

Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary

***Note: The areas of permitted voting for the Bedminster district representative of the Board of Education are: (a) Tuition to be charged the sending district by the receiving district and the bill lists or contracts for the purchase, operation or maintenance of facilities, equipment and instructional materials to be used in the education of the pupils of the sending district; (b) New capital construction to be utilized by sending district**

pupils; (c) Appointment, transfer or removal of teaching staff members providing services to pupils of the sending district, including any teaching staff member who is a member of the receiving district's central administrative staff; (d) Addition or deletion of curricular and extracurricular programs involving pupils of the sending district; (e) Any matter directly involving the sending district pupils or programs and services utilized by those pupils; (f) Approval of the annual receiving district budget; (g) Any collectively negotiated agreement involving employees who provide services utilized by sending district pupils; (h) Any individual employee contracts not covered by a collectively negotiated agreement, if those employees provide or oversee programs or services utilized by sending district pupils; and (i) Any matter concerning governance of the receiving district board of education including, but not limited to, the selection of the board president or vice-president, approval of board bylaws, and the employment of professionals or consultants such as attorneys, architects, engineers, or others who provide services to the receiving district board of education.

(cf: P.L.1996, c.103, s.1)