

MINUTES

for

ORGANIZATION MEETING

JANUARY 7, 2021

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
Linden, New Jersey**

Dr. Marnie Hazelton
Superintendent of Schools

Denise Cleary
Assistant Superintendent

Kathleen A. Gaylord
Business Administrator/
Board Secretary

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

SALUTE TO FLAG

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE:

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, and 18A:10-3, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided as follows:

On December 4, 2020 notice was sent to the Home News Tribune, Star Ledger, Union County Local Source, and the Clerk of the Municipality.

NO SMOKING NOTICE:

BY STATE LAW, THERE IS NO SMOKING PERMITTED IN THIS BUILDING AT ANY TIME.

ROLL CALL 7:18 p.m.:

Mr. De La Cruz	P	Dr. Hazelton	P
Ms. Flemming	P	Mrs. Cleary	P
Mr. Gargano	P	Ms. Gaylord	P
Ms. Guillaume	7:41 p.m.	Attorney, C. Chaudry	P
Ms. Johnson	P		
Mrs. Manganello	P		
Mr. Martucci	P		
Mr. Rivas	P		
Ms. Thomas	P		

The Board Secretary will act as temporary chair of this Organization Meeting until such time as a new president is elected.

ELECTION RESULTS

The following election was held on Tuesday, November 3, 2020 for three members to the Linden Board of Education for a (3) three-year term:

	<u>NO. OF VOTES</u>
SAMUEL DE LA CRUZ, JR.	8,045
JENNIFER FLEMMING	8,228
MALAYSIA THOMAS	7,736

The Business Administrator/Board Secretary declares the following persons as duly elected Members of the Linden Board of Education as a result of the election held on Tuesday, November 3, 2020:

FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM

Samuel De La Cruz, Jr. Jennifer Flemming Malaysia Thomas

Administration of the Oath of Office to the newly elected Board Members:

BOARD MEMBER

Samuel De La Cruz, Jr
Jennifer Flemming
Malaysia Thomas

1. Motion to approve the 2021 Linden Board of Education:

<u>Board Members</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Patrick Gargano	2021
Doris Johnson	2021
Marianthe Manganello	2021
Sheenaider Guillaume	2022
Gregory R. Martucci	2022
Carlos A. Rivas	2022
Samuel De La Cruz, Jr.	2023
Jennifer Flemming	2023
Malaysia Thomas	2023

MOTION 1:

Roll Call:

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Mr. De La Cruz			X		S. De La Cruz
Ms. Flemming			X		J. Flemming
Mr. Gargano		X	X		P. Gargano
Ms. Guillaume			Absent		
Ms. Johnson			X		D. Johnson
Mrs. Manganello			X		M. Manganello
Mr. Martucci			No response		
Mr. Rivas	X		X		C. Rivas
Ms. Thomas			X		M. Thomas

Motion 1 carried.

At this time the Business Administrator/Board Secretary entertains nominations for the Office of President of the Linden Board of Education.

2. Motion made by Patrick Gargano to nominate Doris Johnson for President.

Doris Johnson accepts the nomination as President.

The Business Administrator/Board Secretary conducts a roll call vote for Doris Johnson as President of the Board.

	Yes	No	Abstain		Yes	No	Abstain
Mr. De La Cruz	X			Mrs. Manganello			X
Ms. Flemming	X			Mr. Martucci	No response		
Mr. Gargano	X			Mr. Rivas	X		
Ms. Guillaume	Absent			Ms. Thomas	X		
Ms. Johnson	X						

The Business Administrator/Board Secretary declares election of the new President of the Board and turns the gavel over to Doris Johnson to act as the presiding officer of the meeting.

At this time, the newly elected Board President entertains nominations for the Office of Vice-President of the Linden Board of Education.

3. Motion made by Patrick Gargano to nominate Carlos Rivas for Vice-President.

Carlos Rivas accepts the nomination as Vice-President.

The Business Administrator/Board Secretary conducts a roll call vote for Carlos Rivas as Vice-President of the Board.

	Yes	No	Abstain		Yes	No	Abstain
Mr. De La Cruz	X			Mrs. Manganello			X
Ms. Flemming	X			Mr. Martucci	No response		
Mr. Gargano	X			Mr. Rivas	X		
Ms. Guillaume	Absent			Ms. Thomas	X		
Ms. Johnson	X						

PERSONNEL

4.
 - a) Reappoint Kathleen A. Gaylord as Business Administrator/Board Secretary effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 per negotiated agreement.
 - b) In accordance with N.J.A.C.5:34-5 et seq., and to exercise the duties of a purchasing agent pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:-18A-2b, with specific relevance to the authority, responsibility, and accountability of the purchasing activity of the Board of Education, reappoint Kathleen A. Gaylord as Qualified Purchasing Agent as issued by the director of the division of Local Government Services effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.
 - c) In accordance with N.J.A.C. 17:27-3.2, reappoint Kathleen A. Gaylord as Public Agency Compliance Officer effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.
5. Reappoint Denise Cleary as Assistant Superintendent effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 per negotiated agreement.

Mr. Gargano made a motion to table items 4 and 5 at this time, seconded by Mr. Rivas.

MOTIONS 4 – 5:

Roll Call:

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Mr. De La Cruz			X		
Ms. Flemming			X		
Mr. Gargano	X		X		
Ms. Guillaume			Absent		
Ms. Johnson					X
Mrs. Manganello					X
Mr. Martucci			No response		
Mr. Rivas		X	X		
Ms. Thomas			X		

Motions 4 and 5 tabled.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

6. To adopt Roberts Rules of Order as the official parliamentary procedure manual to be used to conduct meetings and appoint the board secretary and board attorney to act as the parliamentarians for the 2021 – 2022 school year.

BOARD POLICIES/REGULATIONS

7. Motion to adopt the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Education of the City of Linden, Bylaws, Policies and Regulations as stated in the Linden School District Policy Manual.

ADOPTION OF OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS

8. To authorize the Home News-Tribune, Star Ledger, and Union County Local Source be adopted as the official newspapers to be used for the advertisement of meetings and legal ads and all other necessary public notifications for the 2021 – 2022 school year.

MOTIONS 6 – 8:

Roll Call:

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Mr. De La Cruz			X		
Ms. Flemming			X		
Mr. Gargano	X		X		
Ms. Guillaume			Absent		
Ms. Johnson			X		
Mrs. Manganello			X		
Mr. Martucci			No response		
Mr. Rivas		X	X		
Ms. Thomas			X		

Motions 6 – 8 carried.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

9. Motion to approve the Order of Business for 2021 as follows:

Linden Board of Education
ORDER OF BUSINESS – 2021

CALL MEETING TO ORDER
SALUTE TO FLAG
STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE
ROLL CALL
APPROVAL OF MINUTES
NEW/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

REPORTS

Superintendent
Attorney

STANDING COMMITTEES (Agenda items requiring a vote)

Education Committee: (Includes all items pertaining to the education, and physical welfare of students. It includes the purchase of all textbooks and instructional supplies/equipment, the development of educational programs, libraries and the training of professional staff. Additionally, this committee will also deal with matters of audiovisual support.)

Personnel Committee:

Personnel: (Includes all items pertaining to personnel, negotiations, security, public relations, and contracted professional services).

Finance Committee:

Finance: (Includes all matters pertaining to general finance, auditing of bills, official bonds, leases and contracts, insurance, and the annual budget of expenses of the schools. It also includes the cafeteria operation and transportation issues concerning the transportation of students and personnel).

Buildings, Grounds and Security Committee: (Includes all issues related to the construction of new buildings, acquisition of sites, and planning for future needs. It will also include all matters pertaining to the operation of buildings and grounds and all matters pertaining to the security of same.)

Planning & Policy Committee: (Includes matters pertaining to long-range planning of the district initiatives, and shall also coordinate and maintain the district’s policies and board bylaws.)

9. Continued:

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES/DELEGATES
COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC
COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS
ADJOURNMENT

Point of Order – Mr. Gargano asked to move New/Unfinished Business to the beginning of the meeting, after the Approval of Minutes. Ms. Johnson asked for clarification on Unfinished Business. Ms. Gaylord responded.

Ms. Guillaume interrupted the roll call as she just entered the meeting. She asked for clarification on the vote. Ms. Gaylord responded.

MOTION 9:

Roll Call:

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Mr. De La Cruz			X		
Ms. Flemming			X		
Mr. Gargano	X		X		
Ms. Guillaume			X		
Ms. Johnson			X		
Mrs. Manganello				X	
Mr. Martucci			No response		
Mr. Rivas		X	X		
Ms. Thomas			X		

Motion 9 carried.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

10. Motion to approve the Calendar of Board Meetings as follows:

Linden Board of Education
Calendar of Board Meetings
January 2021 – December 2021

(ACTION MAY BE TAKEN AT ANY MEETING)

<u>Work Session</u> Tuesday – 6:00 p.m.		<u>Regular Meeting</u> Thursday – 7:00 p.m.	
Month & Date	Location	Month & Date	Location
		*January 7, 2021 (7:00 p.m.) (Organization Meeting)	
January 26, 2021	All meetings will be held remotely until further notice.	January 28, 2021	All meetings will be held remotely until further notice.
February 23, 2021		February 25, 2021	
March 23, 2021		March 25, 2021	
April 27, 2021		April 29, 2021	
May 25, 2021		May 27, 2021	
June 22, 2021		June 24, 2021	
**July 29, 2021		**July 29, 2021	
**August 26, 2021		**August 26, 2021	
September 28, 2021		September 30, 2021	
October 26, 2021		October 28, 2021	
***November 16, 2021		***November 18, 2021	
****December 16, 2021		****December 16, 2021	

*The Organization Meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.
**The July and August Meetings will be held on the same nights. The Regular Meeting will begin immediately following the Work Session, but no later than 8:00 p.m.
***November Meetings to be held on the third Tuesday and Thursday due to Thanksgiving.
****The December Meetings will both be held on the third Thursday due to Christmas. The Regular Meeting will begin immediately following the Work Session, but no later than 8:00 p.m.

At this time Mr. Rivas wanted to address the Board to change the dates of the meetings listed as follows: Add dates to the July and August meetings, change the November meeting dates, and in December, a meeting will be held only if it's needed.

Discussion ensued and Ms. Johnson said the November meeting would stay as printed.

There was a question regarding tabling or changing the dates. It was agreed to just change the dates as follows:

July 27, 2021	All meetings will be held remotely until further notice.	July 29, 2021	All meetings will be held remotely until further notice.
August 24, 2021		August 26, 2021	
There will be no December meeting unless necessary.			

MOTION 10:

Roll Call:

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Mr. De La Cruz			X		
Ms. Flemming			X		
Mr. Gargano		X	X		
Ms. Guillaume			No response		
Ms. Johnson			X		
Mrs. Manganello				X	
Mr. Martucci			No response		
Mr. Rivas	X		X		
Ms. Thomas			X		

Motion 10 carried.

ETHICS

11. Pursuant to School Ethics Code N.J.S.A.18A:12-24.1, Code of Ethics for School Board Members, each member swears to and affirms the following:
- a) I will uphold and enforce all laws, rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, and court orders pertaining to schools. Desired changes shall be brought about only through legal and ethical procedures.
 - b) I will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of children and will seek to develop and maintain public schools that meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex, or social standing.
 - c) I will confine my board action to policy making, planning, and appraisal, and I will help to frame policies and plans only after the board has consulted those who will be affected by them.
 - d) I will carry out my responsibility, not to administer the schools, but, together with my fellow board members, to see that they are well run.
 - e) I will recognize that authority rests with the board of education and will make no personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the board.
 - f) I will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interest or partisan political groups or to use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends.
 - g) I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools which, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals or the schools. In all other matters, I will provide accurate information and, in concert with my fellow board members, interpret to the staff the aspirations of the community for its school.
 - h) I will vote to appoint the best qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the chief administrative officer.
 - i) I will support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties.
 - j) I will refer all complaints to the chief administrative officer and will act on the complaints at public meetings only after failure of an administrative solution.

MOTION 11:

Roll Call:

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Mr. De La Cruz			X		
Ms. Flemming			X		
Mr. Gargano	X		X		
Ms. Guillaume			X		
Ms. Johnson			X		
Mrs. Manganello		X	X		
Mr. Martucci			No response		
Mr. Rivas			X		
Ms. Thomas			X		

Motion 11 carried.

12. **WHEREAS**, the Linden Board of Education is required pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12 and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7 to adopt policy and approve travel expenditures by board members using local, State, or Federal funds to ensure that travel is educationally necessary and fiscally prudent; and

WHEREAS, the board of education has determined that the training and informational programs sponsored by New Jersey School Boards Association and Union County School Boards Association, and set forth below are directly related to and within the scope of the current responsibilities and the board’s professional development plan; and

WHEREAS, the board of education has determined that participation in the New Jersey School Boards Association and Union County School Boards Association training and informational programs requires school district travel expenditures and that this travel is critical to the instructional needs of the district and/or furthers the efficient operation of the district; and

WHEREAS, the board of education has determined that the school district travel expenditures to New Jersey School Boards Association and Union County School Boards Association programs are in compliance with State travel guidelines as established by the Department of the Treasury and within the guidelines established by the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB), except as superseded by conflicting provision of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the board of education finds that a mileage reimbursement rate equal to the OMB reimbursement rate of .35 cents per mile is a reasonable rate; and

WHEREAS, the board of education has determined that participation in the New Jersey School Boards Association and Union County School Boards Association training and informational programs are in compliance with the district policy on travel; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the board of education hereby approves the attendance of the listed number of school board members New Jersey School Boards Association and Union County School Boards Association training and informational programs, and the cost of attendance including all registration fees, and statutorily authorized travel expenditures, provided that such expenditures are within the annual maximum travel expenditure amount, as follows:

Samuel De La Cruz, Board Member	Marianthe Manganello, Board Member
Jennifer Flemming, Board Member	Gregory Martucci, Board Member
Patrick Gargano, Board Member	Carlos Rivas, Board Member
Sheenaider Guillaume, Board Member	Malaysia Thomas, Board Member
Doris Johnson, Board Member	

MOTION 12:

Roll Call:

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Mr. De La Cruz			X		S. DeLaCruz
Ms. Flemming			X		J. Flemming
Mr. Gargano	X		X		P. Gargano
Ms. Guillaume			X		S. Guillaume
Ms. Johnson			X		D. Johnson
Mrs. Manganello			X		M. Manganello
Mr. Martucci			No Response		
Mr. Rivas		X	X		C. Rivas
Ms. Thomas			X		M. Thomas

Motion 12 carried.

Mr. Rivas asked to add New Business to tonight's agenda to introduce new ideas.

Much discussion ensued as to what Mr. Rivas was saying. Ms. Gaylord then offered to explain to the Board that Mr. Rivas was asking for a Request for Qualifications for Board Attorney which is the same as a Request for Proposal for Board Attorney, as we have done in the past in accordance with Board policy and statute.

13. Motion to advertise for a Request for Qualifications (Request for Proposals) for Board Attorney.

MOTION 13:

Roll Call:

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Mr. De La Cruz			X		
Ms. Flemming			X		
Mr. Gargano		X	X		
Ms. Guillaume				X	
Ms. Johnson			X		
Mrs. Manganello				X	
Mr. Martucci			No Response		
Mr. Rivas	X		X		
Ms. Thomas			X		

Motion 13 carried.

Mr. Gargano asked that at the next meeting, under New Business, the Board entertain bringing back Public Comments to the beginning of the meeting.

Mr. Rivas asked that a COVID-19 Ad Hoc committee be added to the Order of Business. He would also like to propose a committee where students and parents' reactions/comments on COVID could be heard.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Members of the public desiring to make a public comment may come forward at this time.

Please begin your comments by stating your name and address. Individuals are invited to speak on one topic at a time, and no individual will speak more than once, until all individuals so desiring have spoken once.

The public is reminded that to ensure the efficient and orderly operations of the meeting, members of the public will be limited to speaking on items for three minutes.

Tracey Birch
625 Beechwood Road

Mrs. Birch wished everyone a Happy New Year and congratulated the new board members. She asked them to love our staff and most importantly, love our children. Love our children because they deserve that and you will make the right decisions. Some of the decisions might be very difficult, but they will be done for the right reasons. Congratulations to our new president. She asked her to please communicate with the entire board and be transparent. Please allow the public to have a voice and bring back the agenda item comments. Also allow your board members to make their comments without any restrictions. Everyone should be heard and not silenced. If you're here for an extra 15 or 20 minutes because the comments took a little bit longer, so be it. You all took those seats to listen and hear the people that voted you in. If you don't have the time, or you don't care to listen, then don't occupy that seat. Also, in allowing the public to speak at the end of the meetings, could someone address the person who is waiting as it is very difficult to know when it's your turn to speak.

Eloy Delgado, LEA President
842 Grove Street
Elizabeth, NJ

Happy New Year to Dr. Hazelton, Mayor Armstead, Mrs. Cleary, Ms. Gaylord, and all of the board members. Congratulations to our new Board of Education members. You were sworn in tonight and there was a peaceful transfer of power. Democracy can be messy. We can agree, we can disagree, but we never need to be at the point of being disagreeable. He represents 1000 wonderful employees. He is also a stakeholder in that his nephews attend these schools. We will have disagreements and that is okay, but we have one mission and that is to provide the best education possible. He loves being a teacher here in Linden because we do go the extra mile for our kids. Congratulations to Ms. Johnson on becoming the first female African-American Board President. Also, congratulations to Mr. Rivas.

Michele Yamakaitis
Linden City Council President
921 McGillvray Place

Congratulations to our new Board Members, Jennifer Flemming, Samuel De La Cruz, and Malaysia Thomas, as well as congratulations to our new Board President, Doris Johnson and Vice President, Carlos Rivas. This City is here to help. Please get some new microphones for the virtual meetings, it is very difficult to hear.

Lisa Ormon
Linden City Councilwoman
901 Summit Street

She mentioned that she was a School Board Member for eight years before becoming a City Councilwoman. It's not easy, but it is rewarding. She congratulated the three new commissioners and she has no question that they love our children and love our City. Also, congratulations to the new Board President and new Board Vice President. She is not only a friend, but she can be a valuable resource to anyone who would like to reach out to her. Much success for a wonderful year. She said she is proud of all of them and she knows they will be doing the right thing for the children.

Danie Orelie
516 Carnegie Street

She is a resident of Linden as well as a parent and teacher. She congratulated all of the Board Members and wished everyone a Happy New Year. She overheard someone say "love the children" earlier and she is sure that every single one of the Board Members loves the children. Sometimes it's difficult for others to understand the big responsibility that you have, and she wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of them for dedicating their time to serve our children. She is available if anyone needs her.

Mayor Derek Armstead
City of Linden

Mayor Armstead congratulated all of the new Board Members, as well as Ms. Johnson for becoming the first female African-American Board President, and Mr. Rivas on being elected Vice President. He said he's certain that all Board Members love our children. He believes all three new Board Members have children in the system, so there is not doubt that they'll love our children, and he is certain that all who have run and been elected to the Board have loved our children. God bless you all and have a very Happy New Year. He looks forward to working with this Board. Be mindful of our spending. The last thing any family in Linden needs right now is a tax increase.

Dr. Hazelton wished everyone a Happy New Year. Congratulations to our new Board Members, Mr. Samuel De La Cruz, Ms. Jennifer Flemming and Ms. Malaysia Thomas. Congratulations to our new Board President, Ms. Doris Johnson. She looks forward to continuing the conversation as to how we can continue to love our children and do what is best for our children in the City of Linden as well as our teachers and staff. Congratulations to Mr. Carlos Rivas on his appointment as our new Vice President and she looks forward to continuing their working relationship.

To the Linden Community – this afternoon she sent out two correspondences. The first being that we are very optimistic in returning to our hybrid schedule on January 19th. Yesterday, we were in an orange zone. Unfortunately, after speaking with the Board of Health, as of this afternoon we are back in the red zone. On January the 19th we will not be able to open the schools to in-person learning unless next Thursday, January 14th we are back in the orange zone. She will keep the Board of Education as well as all employees updated on our status. She will be sending out a letter to the parents tomorrow informing them of our status and how we plan to continue to offer our students the best educational plan possible in the virtual setting.

Thank you to Mayor Armstead for attending this meeting this evening and Happy New Year to you and your staff.

As a descendant of slaves, a descendant of WWI and WWII veterans, she keeps the United States of America in prayer that we are able to move forward as one country, as one nation, for the sake of the next generation, which are our children. Our children are watching us.

Mrs. Cleary wished everyone a Happy New Year and said she looks forward to working with our new Board Members. Congratulations and welcome aboard. She also looks forward to continuing to work with our current Board Members.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Mrs. Manganello asked if everyone from the public who wished to speak were able to speak? Ms. Johnson said everyone had an opportunity to speak.

She congratulated all of the new Board Members, as well as Ms. Johnson and Mr. Rivas.

She explained the reason that she abstained today on her vote was that she was not contacted by anyone on the Board who was interested in running for president or vice president. Without prior communication with anyone interested in these positions, a conversation with anyone who wanted to run, what their ideas are and their ideas on how to effectively run the meetings of the Board, how to perform the duties, what experience you have and what you bring forth in your leadership, she did not feel she could cast her vote for either yes or no.

She wished everyone good luck and welcomed our new members. She looks forward to working with everyone and moving forward into the new year, communication is key. She knows there were a lot of complaints about transparency and communication this past year. She just hopes that the people who were complaining are going to bring that forth as far as communication and transparency.

To our new Board Members, she asked them to always keep in mind integrity in taking this position. Always do what you feel is right, make your own decisions, do not feel swayed or pressured by anyone to make a hasty decision because what is done here on this Board is really putting our students first, our staff first, the Linden Public School system first and foremost above everything else.

Good luck and Happy and Healthy New Year.

Ms. Guillaume congratulated our new Board Members as well as Ms. Johnson and Mr. Rivas on their appointments.

She apologized for missing out on a few things during the meeting as she is not feeling well.

She sent her condolences to Mrs. Torres. She cannot imagine her pain but please know that we are here.

She wished all a Happy New Year. She hopes that everyone can come together as an example of hope and progress for future generations. She reminded everyone that students come first. They are ultimately the ones affected by the decisions this Board makes. It is not about personal agenda or self-motives. She hopes they can all work together for the betterment of every student they serve. She prays that all stay safe and healthy. Happy New Year to all.

Ms. Flemming thanked God for making this all happen. She then thanked the community for putting signs in their yards and for talking to her. She is here for the children and the community. Thank you for giving them the opportunity. Thank you to the Mayor and his wife, Danie. Also, thank you to the kids, especially Lindsay Francois who was with her the entire time. She thanked her team saying that they are soldiers, they're parents, they have an education, and this is not their first volunteer position. Their team is A+. She thanked the Council Members and also Mr. Martucci. She looks forward to working with everyone. She said "congratulations to us and congratulations to our children because we're gonna do a heck of a job for 'em. We will".

She's overwhelmed by the election. She can't say thank you enough. She said they will work hard and now it's time to get to work.

Mr. De La Cruz wished everyone a Happy New Year and thanked everyone. Thank you to God first, his family and the Mayor. They started as three individuals and finished the campaign as one. Here we have nine individuals, and hopefully they will all become one. He looks forward to the next three years and thanked God for giving him the opportunity to be here. Congratulations to Mr. Rivas and Ms. Johnson.

Mr. Gargano congratulated the new Board Members as well as Ms. Johnson and Mr. Rivas. He thanked the administration and all of our students and the community for getting through 2020. He thanked all of the teachers for everything they did during 2020 – virtual and in-person, extra hours every day to make sure every child is reached.

Mr. Rivas wished a Happy New Year to the City of Linden, to our staff, our teachers, to our children, Dr. Hazelton, Ms. Gaylord, Mrs. Cleary and to all Board Members. Congratulations to our three new Board Members. He said that the City of Linden was making history tonight and asked everyone to take a look at the diversity that was in the room. They are representing the citizens of Linden and those who voted for them to be there as City Officials. He said their job will be for the children to make sure that our school district is successful. He took an opportunity to thank the three former Board Members. This new year will give us to opportunity to do new things and work for the children of the City of Linden.

Ms. Thomas thanked God first, her family and the residents of Linden. She's thankful that the residents had an open heart as they walked through each district. She also thanked the Mayor as she went to his office one day and asked "how can I help"? and here she is today. She thanked everyone who was involved in their campaign. She is a mother of a five-year-old who attends Linden Public Schools. She puts her son first and she will put all children first. She is confident that she and her fellow Board Members will be able to fulfill the duties that they are here to do.

Ms. Gaylord welcomed the new Board Members and said she looks forward to working with them.

Ms. Johnson said she is completely overwhelmed and grateful. When the Mayor asked her if she would like to work for Linden and the community, she asked him what he did. He said he was about his community. She said “I will work with you Mr. Mayor”. This is her third year and it’s not without challenge. It’s not without hope and tears, but we will work very hard and will be transparent. She said we will make sure things go through the proper chain of command and will do their jobs diligently within the code of conduct that they swore an oath to. She’s truly grateful to be part of history. She then acknowledged four women in charge with different backgrounds, and what they have in common is that they’re women, they are mothers, they are daughters, they are sisters and they are making history in Linden and they are going to work hard and make this district the best district in the County and the State.

Thank you to the former Board Members who just left. She learned something from each of them. To the ones still here, it means so much to sit here and be able to work together. We don’t always agree, but the end result is always what’s best for these babies. Work hard, keep an open mind and adhere to the code and we will be fine.

At 8:44 p.m., Mr. Rivas made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Gargano.

Roll Call:

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Mr. De La Cruz			X		
Ms. Flemming			X		
Mr. Gargano		X	X		
Ms. Guillaume			X		
Ms. Johnson			X		
Mrs. Manganello			X		
Mr. Martucci			No Response		
Mr. Rivas	X		X		
Ms. Thomas			X		

Motion carried.

Kathleen A. Gaylord
Business Administrator/Board Secretary