

MINUTES
for
REVISED PUBLIC HEARING
FY 2023
ANNUAL SCHOOL BUDGET
MAY 9, 2022

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Linden, New Jersey

Dr. Marnie Hazelton
Superintendent of Schools

Denise Cleary
Assistant Superintendent

Kathleen A. Gaylord
Business Administrator/
Board Secretary

Dr. Karen Baldwin
Human Resources Manager

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

SALUTE TO FLAG

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE:

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided as follows:

On April 11, 2022 and May 2, 2022 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 6:01:

Board Members		Others	
Ms. Thomas	P	Dr. Hazelton	P
Dr. Berghammer	P	Mrs. Cleary	P
Ms. Cintron	P	Ms. Gaylord	P
Mr. De La Cruz	A	Dr. Baldwin	P
Mrs. Flemming	P	Attorney	A
Ms. Guillaume	6:03 p.m.		
Mr. Martucci	P		
Ms. Pino	A		
Mr. Rivas	P		

At this time, Ms. Gaylord gave a Power Point presentation of the FY2023 budget. After she was done, several board members asked questions as follows:

- Mrs. Flemming asked about the A/C units for the high school. Ms. Gaylord explained that they are heat and A/C units called a split system.
- Mr. Rivas asked about dividing the nurse's office to create two offices as a capital improvement. He asked how this is a capital improvement? Ms. Gaylord said that any improvements made are capital improvements because it increases the value of our property.
- Ms. Cintron questioned the addition of two classrooms in the Information Technology area of the Academy Building. Ms. Gaylord answered that there are currently classrooms there without dividing space. Walls and doors will be erected.
- Dr. Berghammer asked about the painting of the schools. Ms. Gaylord explained that the schools are painted on a rotating basis and that painting goes out for bid. Mr. Rivas tried to clarify by asking if there are capital improvement plans to paint the schools. Ms. Gaylord said that the painting of schools falls under the Maintenance budget, not capital improvements. Dr. Berghammer feels there should be a committee to oversee the work.
- Mr. Rivas questioned the installation of a kitchen exhaust system. Ms. Gaylord responded that it's for a kitchen area at St. Elizabeth's. Duct work was blocked when air conditioning was installed years ago. A foods program for the students will be coming to the school and a system needs to be installed. The church will not make the necessary repairs. Discussion then turned to the rental of the building and if it is being underused.
- Mr. Rivas said the budget looks good. We are not raising taxes, we have additional help from the State of \$6,000,000.00, we have capital projects, we are ready to pay our expenses as planned and everything looks good except the minimal details. He believes that the schools should be afforded more in their own particular budgets.
- Dr. Hazelton explained how St. Elizabeth's (Academy of Excellence) is being utilized. Dr. Berghammer believes the CTE programs should be at the Academy of Excellence, but also, we shouldn't be spending money just because we have money. Discussion ensued about the AOE budget and better utilization of the building.
- Ms. Cintron had questions about high school security. Ms. Gaylord explained that security is something that is built upon every year.

- Ms. Thomas asked if the high school vice principal offices are going to be taking over classroom space. Ms. Gaylord responded that it is her understanding that the current offices will be reconfigured to accommodate for the move of the surveillance room, and no classrooms will be taken as part of this project.
- Ms. Cintron asked who makes the call on which bathrooms get renovated. Ms. Gaylord replied the Supervisor of Maintenance.
- Ms. Gaylord explained how bringing out-of-district students back into the district has saved us money. She also explained how leasing the St. Elizabeth's school building saved the district \$2.5 million because a charter school also wanted to lease the building, but it would have been our responsibility to pay the tuition for those students. Dr. Hazelton explained the difference between an alternative school and CTE programs.
- Mr. Rivas asked how do we get to the amount of \$47 million as a general fund? Ms. Gaylord explained that this represents state aid and gave a quick breakdown.
- Dr. Berghammer asked why it's costing the district \$1.2 million to renovate toilets. Ms. Gaylord responded that all of the bathrooms in School #1 and School #4 are being completely renovated. Mr. Rivas admitted that commercial construction is expensive. Ms. Gaylord said that whatever we don't spend stays in capital reserve to be used for future projects. Mrs. Flemming said that when a government facility renovates, the prices are exponentially higher compared to when a private citizen renovates.
- Mr. Rivas asked if we didn't already approve security upgrades earlier this year. Ms. Gaylord said that it is an ongoing process. We get aid for security and we need to follow the guidelines.
- Mrs. Flemming questioned the \$8.8 million originally for the Academy Building project. Ms. Gaylord said that since the Academy project was defeated, it will now be used toward the School #6 addition. Mr. Rivas clarified that it was decided not to go with the original plans and the board still has the option to make revisions. Discussion ensued.
- Mr. Rivas said according to the last page under revenues, it looks like our budget is lower than last year and asked if this was the case. Ms. Gaylord said yes, it is lower than the 2021-2022 budget.
- Dr. Berghammer asked Dr. Hazelton if enrollment numbers were less this year. Dr. Hazelton replied yes, but the numbers fluctuate.

- Mr. Martucci said that the governor controls state aid, not the legislature. He said you need to look three years down the road to see where your finances are going to be. Population is our number one problem. To solve our problems, we need to make decisions now, because down the road we may not have the money. Dr. Berghammer said it's not about spending it today because you may not have it tomorrow, it's about being fiscally responsible today so that when tomorrow gets hard you can go into your bank account and help keep taxes low.
- Mrs. Flemming asked for an explanation of the last table under motion #1. Ms. Gaylord explained line by line.
- Dr. Berghammer asked for clarification on some budget numbers. Discussion ensued and the confusion was cleared up.

There being no further questions, Mr. Rivas asked the Finance Chair, Mrs. Flemming to read the following motions:

The Finance Committee, upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and the Business Administrator/Board Secretary, present the following motions to the Linden Board of Education for approval:

1. Adoption of the Final Budget for School Year 2022-2023.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Education to approve the 2022-2023 school district budget as follows:

	GENERAL FUND	SPECIAL REVENUES	DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL
2022-23 Total Expenditures	\$154,663,700.00	\$19,082,230.00	\$0.00	\$173,745,930.00
Less: Anticipated Revenues	<u>\$(60,447,784.00)</u>	<u>\$(19,082,230.00)</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$(79,530,014.00)</u>
Taxes to be Raised*	<u>\$ 94,215,916.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$ 94,215,916.00</u>

*0% (tax increase)

1. Continued:

AND, the Board of Education, on March 23, 2022, voted to submit to the Executive County Superintendent a Tentative Budget for SY2022-2023 as follows:

	GENERAL FUND	SPECIAL REVENUES	DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL
2022-23 Total Expenditures	\$152,193,110.00	\$19,082,230.00	\$0.00	\$171,275,340.00
Less: Anticipated Revenues	<u>\$(59,865,194.00)</u>	<u>\$(19,082,230.00)</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$(78,947,424.00)</u>
Taxes to be Raised*	<u>\$92,327,000.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$92,327,916.00</u>

*-2% (tax decrease).

AND, the Tentative Budget was approved by the Executive County Superintendent;

AND, the Board of Education has now determined to modify the Tentative Budget because of the need for additional funding due to an increase in student transportation costs as a result of a Transportation Bid received April 20, 2022;

BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves the modification of the Tentative Budget as follows:

Budget Line	Description	Tentative	Final Budget	Change	Explanation
52200	Contract. Serv. – Aid in Lieu Pymts- Non-Public School	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 400,720.00	\$ 100,720.00	Student Increase
52260	Contr. Serv. (Bet. Home & School)- Vendors	\$1,431,000.00	\$1,881,840.00	\$ 450,840.00	Bid Rate Increase
52280	Contr. Serv. (Oth. than Bet Home & School)-Vendors	\$ 505,000.00	\$ 770,630.00	\$ 265,630.00	Bid Rate Increase
52300	Contr. Serv. (Bet. Home & Sch)-Joint Agreements	\$ 24,800.00	\$ 33,500.00	\$ 8,700.00	Bid Rate Increase

1. Continued:

Budget Line	Description	Tentative	Final Budget	Change	Explanation
52320	Contract Serv. (Sp. Ed. Stds.)-Vendors	\$1,305,000.00	\$1,900,000.00	\$ 595,000.00	Bid Rate Increase
52340	Contract Serv. (Sp Ed Stds.)-Joint Agreements	\$2,950,300.00	\$4,000,000.00	\$1,050,700.00	Bid Rate Increase
52480	TOTAL UNDIST. EXPEND.-STUDENT TRANSP. SERV.	\$6,821,110.00	\$9,291,700.00	\$2,470,590.00	Total Increase

2. RESOLVED, that the Linden Board of Education seeks approval for the inclusion in the General Fund budget an amount of \$8,500,000.00 to be withdrawn from the board of education's approved Capital Reserve Account to supplement the General Fund, Capital Outlay portion of the budget (Fund 12), for the following facilities projects:

Description/Activity	Project Number/Location
Construction/Renovation	Linden Academy
Bathroom Renovations	Schools 1, 4
HVAC Upgrades	McManus M.S.
Lease Payment	Athletic Field
Security System Upgrades	All Schools
Planning/Design for Addition	School 6

3. RESOLVED, that the Linden Board of Education has included in the General Fund Budget \$3,500,000.00 of the board of education's excess surplus funds to help reduce the local tax levy.
4. RESOLVED, that the Linden Board of Education also appropriates in the final budget additional revenue in the amount of \$2,470,590.00 which is comprised of \$1,888,916.00 additional State Aid and \$581,674.00 unassigned fund balance.

5. BE IT RESOLVED that the final budget be approved for the 2022-2023 School Year, and the Business Administrator/Board Secretary be authorized to forward the following final budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for submission:

	GENERAL FUND	SPECIAL REVENUES	DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL
2022-23 Total Expenditures	\$154,663,700.00	\$19,082,230.00	\$0.00	\$173,745,930.00
Less: Anticipated Revenues	<u>\$(60,447,784.00)</u>	<u>\$(19,082,230.00)</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$(79,530,014.00)</u>
Taxes to be Raised*	<u>\$94,215,916.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$94,215,916.00</u>

*0% (tax increase)

6. Authorize the Superintendent and the Business Administrator/Board Secretary to implement the 2022-2023 Annual School Budget pursuant to local and state policies.
7. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.2, BE IT RESOLVED that the Linden Board of Education hereby establishes the following maximums for the 2022-2023 year, and that the School Business Administrator track and record these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded as follows:

Architecture/Engineering	\$1,000,000.00
Legal	\$ 400,000.00
Audit	\$ 50,000.00
Physician	\$ 52,000.00
Total:	\$1,502,000.00

8. WHEREAS, the Linden 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

8. Continued:

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

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves all travel not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23B-1.1 et seq. 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 approves travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23b-1.2(b), to a maximum expenditure of \$250,000.00 for the 2022-2023 school year for all staff and Board members, and in accordance with 6A:23A-7.3, the maximum expenditure for 2021-2022 was \$250,000.00 and \$65,943.00 has been spent to date.

MOTIONS: 1-8

Roll Call:

Board Member	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Ms. Thomas			X		
Dr. Berghammer			X		
Ms. Cintron			X		
Mr. De La Cruz			ABS		
Mrs. Flemming	M		X		
Ms. Guillaume		S	X		
Mr. Martucci			X		
Ms. Pino			ABS		
Mr. Rivas				N	

Motions 1 – 8 carried.

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.

Two staff members from Pomptonian spoke about the food service and how they care about the children and how staff members are worried about losing their jobs. They asked the board to think about the employees that are working for this company.

Mr. Rivas responded by saying that there are still ongoing conversations about how the district will move forward.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

NONE

There being no further business to discuss, Dr. Berghammer made a motion to adjourn at 7:42 p.m., seconded by Ms. Thomas.

Roll Call:

Board Member	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Ms. Thomas		S	X		
Dr. Berghammer	M		X		
Ms. Cintron			X		
Mr. De La Cruz			ABS		
Mrs. Flemming			X		
Ms. Guillaume			X		
Mr. Martucci			X		
Ms. Pino			ABS		
Mr. Rivas			X		

Motion carried.

Kathleen A. Gaylord
Business Administrator/Board Secretary