BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
280 ASBURY-WEST PORTAL ROAD
ASBURY, NEW JERSEY 08802
908-479-6336

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

July 8, 2020

(Held virtually due to state of emergency from coronavirus)

For the Special Meeting of the
Bethlehem Township Board of Education being held by video conference call on
Wednesday, July 8, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER – President Staiano opened the meeting at 6:30p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE:

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Law of New Jersey, adequate notice of this meeting was provided by sending notice to: The Hunterdon County Democrat, Bethlehem Township Clerk and by posting at the main entrances at Ethel Hoppock Middle School and Thomas B. Conley Schools and on the District website. To participate in the meeting call 1-304-568-6457 and use Pin: 952 674 121#

Please be advised:

- Pursuant to Board Policy #0167, members of the public who wish to make a statement during the Public Comments portion of the meeting may speak for no more than three (3) minutes.
- Pursuant to Board Policy #0167, all statements from the public must be directed to the President or other presiding officer; no participant may address or question board members individually.
- Since this meeting is being held by video conference due to the coronavirus pandemic, if the public wishes to make a comment, they may do so by:

  (1). By calling in to the number provided for participants on the videoconference

- Public participation at board meetings is intended to allow individual members of the public to address the Board on issues of public concern. The public comment period is an opportunity for the Board to listen to citizen concerns, but not to debate issues or enter into a question-and-answer session or a "cross examination" between the public and individual members. While all comments made by the public will be taken under advisement, the Board will not respond to comments made by the public.

IV. ROLL CALL

Mrs. Jessica Gleason *present*
Mr. Joey Pinto *present*
Mrs. Chrysa Staiano *present*
Dr. Allison Isola *present*
Dr. Gregory C. Farley, CSA *present*
Mrs. Beverly Vlietstra, Interim SBA/BS *Absent*
Mrs. Debra D. Roosen *present*
Ms. Kellie Bancalari *present*
Mr. Gregory Glazar *present*

Theresa Moore – Board Attorney – *present*
Ernie Turner – **Acting Board Secretary** - *present*

MOTION by President Staiano to nominate Mr. Ernie Turner from Summit Management to be the Acting Board Secretary for this meeting. Dr. Isola seconded the nomination. On a voice vote, all present were in favor, except Mrs. Roosen, who abstained. The motion carried.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Mrs. Meyer – has w children currently attending Conley. Needs update on transferring 6th grade to Conley.
- Mrs. Davis – Wants the BOE to reconsider their vote to move the 6th grade to Conley.
- Mrs. Hale – Would like the BOE to do more research on moving the 6th grade to Conley.
- Mrs. Faul – Does not support moving 6th grade to Conley. Not enough information has been presented to the Community.
- Mrs. Santoro – Requested 6th grade remain at Hoppock. The reasons stated were safety and welfare. Mental health of students.
- Mrs. Goodwin – In favor of rescinding the current vote to move 6th grade to Conley.
- Mrs. Lippens – Does not support 6th graders going to Conley school.
- Mr. Santoro – Not one of the speakers has supported this vote.

Dr. Farley spoke on the move of the 6th grade, and the challenges facing the school district.

VI. EDUCATION

- Discussion - Long Range Planning

President Staiano explained the need for the Special Meeting– to get input from all the board members for brainstorming session. Some options discussed for the district:

- Addition on Conley – 4 classrooms/offices/upgrades
- No addition to Conley
- Regionalization

A Board of Education discussion ensued about consolidating two schools. Several of the Board Members were in favor of a K-8 district, and it was decided to have a survey sent out to the Community. This will help the Board of Education decide which option, either a K-8 in district or combine with another district, will be the best option to move forward.

A. Rescind the Approval to Change the Grade Configuration at the Thomas B. Conley School and the Ethel Hoppock Middle School starting in the 2020-2021 School Year.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby rescinds its decision made on May 26, 2020 approving the change in the Grade Configuration at the Thomas B. Conley School and the Ethel Hoppock Middle School, starting in the 2020-2021 School Year.

MOTION made by Mrs. Roosen, seconded by Mrs. Staiano to rescind the approval to change the grade configuration at Thomas B. Conley school. Mrs. Roosen explained the reasoning behind the agenda item and said that the Board tries to do what is best for the children and the Community.

Dr. Farley discussed the process of the decision to move the 6th grade to Conley:

- Budget
- Most effective and efficient use of staff, resources and materials.
- Social /emotional well being of students. Keeping students familiar with building, especially helpful during COVID-19.

The Board discussed at length how this decision will impact district. Dr. Farley answered several questions about ventilation, how students will be moving in hallways and safely distancing. Mrs. Roosen disagreed that this move is good for the 7th & 8th grade students and questioned how the extra-curricular activities were going to happen with 6th grade at Conley. Dr. Farley stated that extra curriculars were still going to happen.

On a roll call vote, Ms. Bancalari, Mr. Pinto, Mrs. Roosen were in favor to rescind the 6th grade move, and Mr. Glazar, Mrs. Gleason, Dr. Isola and Mrs. Staiano voted no. The motion did not carry.

VII. NOTEWORTHY DATES:

A. July 28, 2020 – Regular Board of Education Meeting - 6:30 p.m.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN by Ms. Bancalari, seconded by Mrs. Gleason to adjourn the meeting. On a voice vote, all present were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 9:10p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beverly Vlietstra

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Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary