

PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING AND REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES

Demarest Board of Education
568 Piermont Road, Demarest, New Jersey
April 28, 2020
6:30 P.M.

Due to COVID-19, this meeting is being held remotely. For public comments please join the meeting using this [link](#) . Meeting ID: 918 8910 1246 Password: 901290

I. OPENING

- A. The meeting was called to order by President Holzberg at 6:30 pm.
- B. Present: Cantatore, Choi, Governale, Lee, Schliem, Verna, Holzberg.
Absent: None
Also present: Mr. Fox, Superintendent and Mr. Perez, Business Administrator/ Board Secretary
- C. President Holzberg read the following announcement:
The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon.

In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Demarest Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted at the Borough Hall and at the Middle School and by notifying in writing two newspapers: The Record and The Suburbanite.

II. FLAG SALUTE

- A. President Holzberg led the flag salute.

III. ROLL CALL

Present: Cantatore, Governale, Kirtane, Lee, Schliem, Verna, Holzberg.
Absent: None
Also present: Mr. Fox, Superintendent and Mr. Perez, Business Administrator/ Board Secretary

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS

- A. It was moved by Verna, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous voice vote of those present to approve:

- March 10, 2020 Preliminary Budget/COW Meeting Minutes
- March 10, 2020 Executive Meeting Minutes
- March 31, 2020 Regular Session Meeting Minutes

V. CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

VI. BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A. Board President Holzberg spoke of how proud she is of the districts performance during these trying times. She is extremely pleased with the staff and administration, noting that they also have family concerns at home to manage.

VII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Superintendent Fox echoed Mrs. Holzberg's comments and added that the move from asynchronous learning to synchronous learning in a short amount of time went very smoothly. Feedback from students, staff and parents has been positive.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None at this time.

IX. OTHER REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- A. Mr. Fox and Mr. Perez presented the 2020/2021 Budget.
- B. Kelly Stevens, Supervisor of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment presented the results of the NJSLA (New Jersey Student Learning Assessment for Science for the fifth and eighth grades taken in the spring of 2019. The Demarest School District performed well above state average and strategies are being developed to further help those on the lower end of the scoring.

X. REVIEW OF AGENDA

A. Board members reviewed the items.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no motion for public comment being no one from the public was present.

XII. ACTIONS

1. It was moved by Choi, seconded by Verna and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve Melanie Baltzer, resource room at County Road School and Luther Lee Emerson School BA step 1, effective May 18, 2020 through the end of the 2019/2020 school year, PCR 2280-030-200-00001, budget code 11-120-100-101-030-00-10 (.5) and 11-120-100-101-050-00-10 (.5), as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

2. It was moved by Choi, seconded by Verna and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the following mentor/mentee, effective May 18, 2020, through the end of the 2019/2020 school year, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

Mentor	Mentee
Gina Long	Melanie Baltzer

3. It was moved by Choi, seconded by Verna and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve provisional employment of Jacqueline Venuti, leave replacement, MA, Step 1, effective May 1, 2020 through the end of the 2019/2020 school year, PCR 2210-040-200-00001, budget code 11-000-219-104-000-00-31 as recommended by the Chief School Administrator. Employment status would become effective upon candidate's compliance with P.L. 1986, c.116 (revised 6/30/98) and N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.7.

B. Instruction – Pupils/Programs

None

C. Support Services – Staffing

None

D. Support Services – Board of Education

1. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve proposal from EI Associates, district architect of record, to provide professional architectural and engineering services for the County Road School Addition at a cost not to exceed \$260,300.00 plus related project reimbursable expenses. This contract is awarded without competitive bidding as a “professional service” by a firm authorized to perform such services, under the provision of the Public School Contract law, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

2. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the following resolution, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

Opposing Delay in Transmission of Quarterly Property Tax Revenue to School Districts

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 3902, currently pending in the State Legislature, would authorize the Department of Community Affairs to permit municipalities to delay the quarterly transmission of property tax revenues to school districts during gubernatorial-declared emergencies; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's public schools are highly dependent on property tax revenue to support education programs; and

WHEREAS, on average, local property taxes constitute close to 60% of public school revenue, with the percentage even greater in a significant number of districts; and

WHEREAS, a delay in payments from municipalities would result in a financial crisis for school districts, seriously disrupting the educational process—and bringing it to a halt; and

WHEREAS, although public school buildings are closed during the current health emergency, the education of our students is taking place through remote learning and home instruction; and

WHEREAS, continued timely transmission of school property taxes is critical for the education process to continue without interruption; and

WHEREAS, even though municipalities are designated as the authorities to collect property taxes, these taxes are levied for specific purposes—e.g., municipal, school, county, fire district—and these obligations must continue to be met; and

WHEREAS, as currently written, A-3902, which is intended to ease a financial burden on municipalities, would place a severe strain on school districts and the students and families that they serve; and

WHEREAS, the Demarest Board of Education recognizes the impact of the current public health emergency on the state and local governments, as well as local school districts, but believes this legislation would worsen the situation for our communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Demarest Board of Education urges the State Senate and the Governor to oppose A-3902; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be delivered to Governor Phil Murphy, State Senate President Stephen M. Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin; and the 39th Legislative District's representatives in the state Senate and General Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to the New Jersey School Boards Association.

3. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the following resolution, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

WHEREAS, the Demarest Board of Education previously adopted a Code Section 125 plan; a Code Section 105 Health Flexible Spending Account ("Health FSA") and a Code Section 129 Dependent Care Spending Account ("Dependent Care FSA"), collectively referred to as the Cafeteria Plan (the "Plan"); and

WHEREAS, with the CARES ACT (COVID-3 Stimulus Bill), which permits employers to amend the Plan to allow Over the Counter (OTC) medicines as eligible for reimbursement without the a prescription/letter of necessity for the Health FSA; and

WHEREAS, effective 1/1/20 the Demarest Board of Education desires to amend the Plan as set forth in the attached amendment and Summary of Material of Modifications to permit OTC) medicines as eligible for reimbursement without the a prescription consistent with the requirements set forth in (COVID-3 Stimulus Bill); and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Demarest Board of Education has hereby reviewed the attached amendment and Summary of Material Modifications and does hereby approve the adoption as set forth therein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Demarest Board of Education are hereby authorized to take the steps necessary to execute this amendment.

4. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve donation of certain district cafeteria foods prior to their expiration date(s) in conjunction with Demarest Mayor's office and the Demarest Borough Council, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

5. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the donation of iPad(s) no longer in service to the district, to the Bergen County Prosecutors Office, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

6. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the donation of iPad(s) no longer in service to the district, to the Bergen County Health Care Center, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

7. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present, with Cantatore abstaining, to approve waiving of May tuition charges for Demarest Early Learners, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

E. Support Services – Fiscal Management

1. It was moved by Schliem, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the following resolution, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of Demarest, approves the following 2020/2021 school year budget using the 2020/2021 state aid amounts and authorizes the Business Administrator/Board Secretary to submit the 2020/2021 school year budget to the Executive County Superintendent for approval within the statutory deadline;

General Current Expense (Fund 11)	\$16,584,221
Capital Expenditures (Fund 12)	<u>729,814</u>
Total General Current Fund	\$17,314,035

Special Grants & Entitlements (Fund 20)	\$ 140,941
Repayment of Debt (Fund 40)	<u>617,900</u>
	\$18,072,876

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Fund tax levy of \$14,776,562 is approved to support General Current Expenses and \$617,900 is approved to support Repayment of Debt for the 2020/2021 school year.

2. It was moved by Schliem, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to confirm the March 31, 2020 payroll in the amount of \$414,675.62.

3. It was moved by Schliem, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to confirm April 15, 2020 payroll in the amount of \$426,723.04.

4. It was moved by Schliem, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve March 2020 in office checks in the amount of \$426,245.18 and April 28, 2020 budget checks in the amount of \$140,792.81 as follows:

* Laura Schliem does hereby abstain on check # 19537. Her vote herein shall constitute a vote as to payment of all other bills.

<u>Subtotal Per Fund</u>	<u>Amount</u>
11 General Current Expense	<u>\$555,468.43</u>
Total Bills:	\$ 555,468.43

5. It was moved by Schliem, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the following resolution:

Receipt of Certification from Board Secretary

Pursuant to N.J.A.C 6:20-2.13 (d), I, Thomas J. Perez certify that as of March 31, 2020, no budgetary line item account has obligations or payments (contractual orders) which in total exceeds the amount appropriated by the district Board of Education pursuant to N.J.S.A 18A:22-8 and 18A:22-8.1.

6. It was moved by Schliem, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the following resolution:

Certification of Board of Education

Pursuant to N.J.A.C 6:20-2.13 (e), we certify that as of March 31, 2020 after review of the secretary’s monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district official, to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been over-extended in violation of NJAC 6:20-2.13 (b) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

7. It was moved by Schliem, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to acknowledge receipt of the February 2020 Report of the Board Secretary, A148 and Report of the Treasurer, A-149.

8. It was moved by Schliem, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to confirm the following budget transfer for March 2020:

<u>To:</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>
11-000-261-580	Required Maint Travel	\$ 35
11-190-100-610	Regular Instruction General Supplies	<u>72,570</u>
		\$ 72,605

<u>From:</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>
11-000-261-890	Required Maint Other Objects	\$ 35
11-000-291-270	Employee Benefits Health Insurance	<u>72,570</u>
		\$ 72,605

F. Other

1. It was moved by Verna, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous voice vote of those present to adopt the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Demarest Board of Education will convene in a closed Executive Session on Tuesday, May 12, 2020 at 6:30 P.M., if necessary, to discuss personnel, student and/or legal matters.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the nature of the discussion is expected to be disclosed to the public at a future date.

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no motion for public comment being no one from the public was present.

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

- Ms. Governale asked if work could begin earlier on the STEM labs while the buildings are closed.
- Mr. Fox noted there would need to be an executive session next week.
- Mrs. Holzberg inquired about possible modifications once schools re-open.
- Ms. Governale asked on behalf of a district parent, what might happen to students with health risks when school re-opens.

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. There was no motion to enter the Executive Session.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

- A. It was moved by Verna, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous voice vote to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 P.M.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Perez

Thomas J. Perez
Business Administrator and Board Secretary