

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORKSESSION MINUTES – APRIL 10, 2018

NOTICE OF MEETING:

The worksession meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, April 10, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to the notice sent to each member. Action was taken.

Mr. Nufrio called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mr. David Arminio, Dr. Guy Francis, Mrs. Sherry Higgins, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. Jeffrey Monge, Mr. Vito Nufrio, Mrs. Nellis Regis-Darby, Mrs. Linda Richardson, Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

None

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Mr. Gregory Tatum, Mr. Gerry Benaquista, Mrs. Moses, Mr. Gregory Brennan, Mrs. Kim Conti, Mrs. Ann Hart, Mr. Craig Wojcik, Mr. Barry Loessel, Mrs. Sandra Paul

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Paul Griggs, Esq.

Mr. Nufrio led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Brennan read the statement required under the “Open Public Meetings Act”, a copy of which is on file in the office of the Board Secretary.

Mrs. Minneci read the District’s mission statement.

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC ON RESOLUTIONS IN BOLD ONLY

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes will approved at the regular meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS:

These are typical communications for leaves, resignations and retirements and more detailed in P-3 and P-4.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

Mr. Tatum stated two recognitions will be made next week – Union High School for outstanding leadership and certificates for students and staff for participation in a parent google workshop. There will be other items that will come from me next week.

Mr. Monge stated Mr. Tatum last month we didn't have the ROTC come out but I think there was a miscommunication because they didn't know. Mr. Tatum stated thank you Mr. Monge that was on the agenda and Hannah Caldwell library too.

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Regis-Darby presented the Education/Student Discipline Committee agenda.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated take a look at the calendar – June 4th we added Eid – that is a Muslim holiday – which is a good thing to incorporate all faiths into the District. Also half days for the students will no longer be on Fridays, it will be on Wednesdays due to the new professional development calendar that is on for the next school year. Also, January 22-28 will be half days for the high school because that is for their exams. PDs for the teachers is being changed to Wednesdays.

For discussion with the other Board members about adding early dismissal time to the calendar because I know that I have gotten questions as a Board member as to what time do the students get out on early dismissal days so I think that is something that we should talk about. I think we should add the dismissal times to the calendar for K-4, 5, middle school and high school and delayed openings. Mr. Tatum stated there isn't much room but we will see what we can do.

Usually I know that the kids are off on election day but this year there is a half day can you speak to why? Mr. Tatum stated it is a situation that has to do with the number of days that we have available – 180 days. Last year we had a request to be off on election day. My thought was it was because it was a governors election and the year before was a presidential election. We anticipated that might be a consideration at the Board meeting and maybe want to amend – so if that is the case we can certainly move that to being a day closed. It is in the total count of the school days. We thought maybe since it was not a major election we would stay open but if the Board has other feelings about that we can discuss it.

Mrs. Minneci stated it is not a presidential or gubernatorial – does the polls open at a later time? Mrs. Regis-Darby stated no, the same time. I think that because we are having an election and so many strangers in and out of the building – just for the safety of our students I think they should have the day off but that is my opinion. Mr. Arminio stated I agree, especially in light of the tenor of society and everything that is being spoken about with school safety. Mr. Nufrio stated it is also disruptive to the schedule because the principals have to make the adjustments to the area where the voters come in. Mr. Tatum stated we do have security. Mr. Nufrio stated do we have a consensus that we should be closed? Mr. Tatum stated I don't have a problem with that. Mr. Nufrio asked anybody opposed to closing for the entire day? Hearing none. Mr. Tatum stated we will make the adjustments. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated thank you very much.

Also E-5 to remind the public that the K-4 will start at 8:45 a.m. – the new starting time for September. E-3 – secondary pull/out, replacement program at Kawameeh Middle School – I was talking to the rest of the Education Committee about that because I noticed that is going to be 12-1 program and the back-up says it is for the least restrictive environment and just so the

other members of the Board know that 12-1 is not a least restrictive environment. I think we have to be careful with that and I'm not sure if I'm stepping over. Mr. Tatum stated can you just speak to the change in time.

Mrs. Moses stated the change in time to 8:45. In the elementary level we have two start times and the end time is 3:05 and that is not going to change. PreK-2 start at 9:05, 3-4 start 8:45 – the bus drops off all kids at 8:30 in the morning so that means that you have preschool and kindergarten on the playground for a half-hour and there are a lot of things that occur at that time. Principals are doing a lot of parallel instruction, RTI and 15 minutes makes a world of difference in education. So the principals brought to Mr. Benaquista and myself that 90% of the kids are at school and they should start at 8:45 and the teachers are already there by contractual time. When talking with someone from the State, they asked why do we have some kids come in 15 minutes later and not getting instructional time so that is why they decided.

Mr. Nufrio asked what is the start time for teachers? Mrs. Moses stated elementary 8:25 and kids go in at 8:45 – they are all there. Mr. Benaquista stated this will make it all consistent. Mr. Nufrio stated not the teacher's start time. Mr. Benaquista stated now it will be. Mr. Nufrio asked what will it be? Mr. Benaquista stated it would be 15 minutes prior to 8:45. Mr. Nufrio stated so 8:30. Mr. Moses stated 3-4 grade teachers are there at 8:15 – so that is 30 minutes earlier. Mr. Benaquista stated its says in the contract so many minutes for the kids. Mrs. Moses stated 15 minutes start time before students and 15 minutes after so the kids are out at 3:05 – staff does leave until 3:20.

Anne Margaret Shannon stated I would like to make a comment and you can discuss it at another time but the start and end time of the day is a negotiable item and the Board can't unilaterally change the start time. It is something that needs to be discussed. Mrs. Moses asked what is the start time? Ms. Shannon stated the start and end time of the day is a negotiable item. Mr. Nufrio stated she is asking what is the start time? Ms. Shannon stated for 3-4 graders is 8:15. Mrs. Moses stated it is 8:25. Ms. Shannon stated it is 20 minutes before the children come in. Mrs. Moses stated yes and 20 minutes after. We are changing the student start time, not the staff start time. Mr. Nufrio stated that should be uniformed – isn't it? Mr. Benaquista stated the contract says so many minutes before the children. We are starting the children's day consistently at 8:45. Mrs. Moses stated in the book it says 8:20 and all grades get out at 3:05 – from pre-k to 4th grade. Staff will leave at 3:20. Staff is there 8:25 – so 20 minutes before – if you start school at 8:45 that is 20 minutes.

Ms. Shannon stated my point is the start time of the day is a negotiable item – a board just can't change the start time. Mr. Benaquista stated we are not changing the start time. Mrs. Moses stated are you saying we are changing the start time of the teachers? Ms. Shannon stated if you change the start of the students doesn't that change the start time of the teachers? Mrs. Moses stated no. Mr. Benaquista stated it will always be a 15 minute start. Mr. Tatum stated Ann we have a meeting tomorrow and we can talk about this a little bit more.

Mr. Nufrio stated now since it is a uniformed time for the children, it should be the same for staff obviously.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated E-6 – the back-up stated only Burnet Middle School but we are suggesting since it is going to be at both of the schools – changing their block time – a 60-minute block to a 45-minute block to incorporate more learning time for the kids, especially with writing and RTI – we just ask that the back-up state it is for both middle schools and not just one.

Going back to E-3 we do need a clarification because it says 12-1. Mrs. Conti stated I'm reading this and it does ask specifically address less restrictive environment and what it should be saying is by allowing students to remain within the building – not a self-contained setting where the kids may be pulled out for one period but still participate with the other students within the building and not being pulled out of the building. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I think the wording has to change because it implies that it is 12-1 and that is not least restrictive environment. Mrs. Conti stated if you look at what the County is asking – how does it address less restrictive – so it is saying how it is less restrictive but we should also put in a little more clarification. We will do that.

Mr. Nufrio stated for further clarification on employees in E-7 – that only applied to full-time employees.

FISCAL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Moved by Mr. Monge, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the following resolutions be adopted:

F-20. APPROVE INCREASE IN PROPOSAL – PETER B. FALLON, ESQ.

Approve increase in proposal in the amount of \$1,800 for Peter B. Fallon, Esq. to provide services for an independent investigation of affirmative action complaint at an hourly rate of \$165 per hour (new total \$6,800), in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Monge asked why the jump? Mr. Benaquista stated we are at the end of the investigation and he said he had to come and speak to a lot more witnesses. He put a proposal together and based on the information he had it would be x-number of days and witnesses and it has gone way above that. He is saying it equates to \$1,800 more. I can validate that the gentleman has put in a ton of time. Mr. Nufrio stated we did explore that yesterday with Mr. Tatum, Mr. Griggs and Mrs. Minneci and you were going to provide some additional information pertaining to that if necessary to justify the increase. Mr. Griggs stated I know he interviewed a lot more people than he originally anticipated. I think when he received the assignment he knew what it was but once you get into it. Mr. Benaquista stated the x-number of people that he needed to speak to and I can tell you my opinion of how many I thought you would have to talk to in the beginning. I can have that for you in two weeks. Mr. Monge stated I was o.k. with the first statement.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Nufrio

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Monge stated we combined Fiscal and Operations Committees because we had a shorter period of time. The vast majority of the time we talked about the budget. We can probably do that again in old business. I wanted to give a highlight of that.

Mr. Monge presented the rest of the Education/Student Discipline Committee agenda.

Mr. Monge stated F-14, F-15 and F-16 is our attempt to try to jive with our approved RFP/RFQ schedule. We are going to have a conversation on Friday and we are going to review those dates. We will iron that out and come back with any edits that come out of that as necessary.

Mr. Brennan stated we just put out five RFP's for professional services in line with the calendar for auditors, legal, banking, property and casualty insurance and health benefits broker. They are all out and we are already getting responses to provide them the RFP's. Mrs. Cappiello stated it was published on April 5th. Mr. Monge asked are they online. Mr. Brennan stated yes on the website.

Mr. Monge stated Mr. Nufrio the last time there was a process that we had on who was going to review them. Mr. Nufrio stated I haven't decided as of yet because I knew there was a delay in putting out the postings. Mr. Brennan stated it was a short delay. Mr. Nufrio stated it was scheduled for March 1st but they went out early April. Mr. Brennan stated March is when we were putting it together. Mr. Nufrio stated there were other circumstances that caused the delay. When is the conclusion? Mr. Brennan stated April 24th they are all due back. Mr. Nufrio stated I will notify those members that I will select for the ad hoc committee. Some already are prescribed as the finance per the policy. You already noted that. If you wish to renew that simply send that again to be sure.

The only thing is tonight was a unique situation that we combined the two committees but you can certainly consider that for the future and it might be wise to consider combining those two committees unless there is opposition. We can take that up on the 24th so think about that. If you want to fuse those two committees – fiscal and operations, that is certainly something you can consider as a whole. It would cut down on some time and they are back-to-back. The only thing I would have to reassess the number of the members if we did that. For now it stays the way it is unless we change it.

Mr. Monge stated the one thing we can discuss is my experience two years ago in our review – some of it was way over the heads of the Board members I think I should be doing – the review of the architect. I have some background because of the business I'm in but some of that stuff I would think in consideration it would be great for our review to be done with the staff first and then come to us with a short list for the Board members to review. We have RFP's for the architects – there were ten of them we had this huge thing and it was overwhelming for folks to review. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I agree Jeff. Mr. Nufrio stated let's see what the responses you have. Communicate with me the number of responses and then we will take it from there.

Mr. Brennan stated with the health benefits a year ago, we had an ad hoc committee and what we did was we had the attorney review proposals that came back and then I summarized the proposal and presented it to the committee. Mr. Monge stated it worked out well and it was clear cut.

Mr. Nufrio stated are we looking at this point to consider repeating a first filter by you and your department in unison with the ad hoc committee or separate and apart from that? Mr. Brennan stated separate and apart. Mr. Monge stated what I ended up doing and I have a spreadsheet and I came up with different categories and that is what I used to assess and I shared that and I know that there was an original assessment that was not a good one. It was a historic RFP and Mr. Griggs may have seen that. It was a very weird and terrible format. I think that the format of summarizing should come from the staff – I would suggest and coming to us and we kind of hear what the finalists are and why and then we can go from there.

Some of the stuff is clear cut like the bank services and it is what it is. Mr. Nufrio stated can we state a number 3-5. Mr. Brennan stated yes 3-5 proposals. Mr. Nufrio stated depending on which particular professional services is. Mr. Brennan stated it sounds good.

Mr. Monge stated F-14 to F-16 we will discuss that in the committee that we will have on Friday; as well as F-18 which is part of the calendar but it didn't fall within the same extensions so we will look at that and rewording that and repositioning that approval.

F-19 and F-21 – I just want to offer a little clarity and we had an email exchange with Mr. Griggs. Our last meeting, I discussed trying to have additional information on who is requesting – if there is a charge for legal, we should know who are they doing the work for essentially. If he made a phone call to me on a request – and it is spoke to Jeff and this is what it was and here goes the charge; that is what we talked about last month and Mr. Griggs said if the Board is o.k. with that and I know Mr. Nufrio was the one who initially wanted these charges on here to offer the transparency so I asked for that transparency to be a little more clearer so that we can capture what we are doing for 2018. You said it was o.k. and it shouldn't be an issue and there was no issue with the Board so then I thought that was going to be that. But then I got a push back so I want to again bring that up and I don't think it should be an issue as a third-party contractor for the Board to be able to receive information that offers more clarity.

Mr. Griggs stated I looked at our bills and it is the opinion of our firm that your bills are comprehensive and they are essentially the same bills you have been getting for 27 months. Nothing has changed in those bills. Our firm will not change the format of that bill; what you see what we are going to provide for the District. We are not going to make a change. Mr. Monge stated I deal with lawyers all the time. I have never heard someone say that. You are telling me if I want more detail on who asked to do x, y and z, you won't provide that. Mr. Nufrio stated it is already there. Mr. Griggs stated the reality is you are working in a school district where there is privileged information with kids and personnel. Mr. Monge stated I'm not asking about that you know that. Mr. Griggs stated I'm telling you what our firm's position is and those bills are not to be changed because of your concern. Jeff you may interrupt other people when you talk but have the courtesy to not interrupt people. Bills that contain confidential information – they are structured in a way to avoid the disclosure of information

which is why anytime this Board gets an OPRA request, we review the bills a second time to make sure that there is nothing there to disclose – that is our position on it. That is the same position we have with any other client that we have. We are not changing the bills and that is my professional opinion to the Board of Education and I'm not going to argue with you.

Mr. Nufrio stated I made the change two years ago where I specified that the previous method was too vague. I looked at these bills and there are names attached to the charges but you are asking for a total disclosure of what was being talked about and this is exactly what the law firm provides. Mr. Monge stated I'm not asking that. Mr. Nufrio stated then I don't know what you are asking for. Look at the bills the way they are. Mr. Monge stated if he has a conversation with Mrs. Minneci. Mr. Nufrio stated Mrs. Minneci needs my permission to have a conversation and that is according to the policy distributed to everyone. Mr. Monge stated I am just offering an example. At one point I am noted on there as you speaking to me based on some follow-up questions, if Mrs. Minneci had a similar type of conversation and that work was noted and a charge for it but it didn't carry Mrs. Minneci's name, all I'm saying is obviously it should.

Mrs. Minneci stated you are just asking if whoever requests information, just to have their name with the charge. Mr. Monge stated exactly. Mr. Nufrio stated but it is that way – look at the back-up. Mr. Monge stated what I'm going to do is I will take an example, I will highlight those that I have questions on. Mr. Griggs stated that is fair. Mr. Monge stated I can go through this on a monthly basis but I don't want to. Let's try that and let's see where it goes.

Mr. Griggs stated it just begs to question – you have seen the bills for 27 months and now you are requesting something. Mr. Monge stated Mr. Griggs that is not fair and it doesn't matter. Mr. Griggs stated it is a logical question. Mr. Monge stated I'm evaluating our cost savings for having a third-party legal firm which was why we have your firm here and just looking at historically how are we doing, how much is being driven by this Board versus in the past. It is a fair question. Mr. Griggs stated I didn't say it wasn't a fair question. It seems strange and I'm not out of line whoever is sitting in the audience. Mr. Nufrio stated I would appreciate if the public would not jump in on this conversation. Otherwise I will ask you to be removed. Mr. Griggs stated it is curious to me why you wouldn't raise that question in the past. We have had the same bills and of the 80 districts that we represent to Vito's credit, this is the only District I know where you folks literally get all the bills every month. It is fine by us. It is unique.

Mr. Monge stated the reason why I'm doing it. Mr. Griggs stated I heard what you said. Mr. Monge stated so that is the answer but you are saying you don't know why and I'm answering you. With all due respect let's take that approach, we all agreed with it. Mr. Nufrio stated present that example and send it to Mr. Griggs and copy me and we will talk about it. Mr. Monge stated thank you very much.

Dr. Francis stated I would like to add – where you were starting to ask the fees be listed by the lawyer was because we wanted to see how well we were doing when we were paying Jim Damato over \$200,000 a year and just to see if by hiring a third-party part-time attorney, are we saving any money and I agree with Jeff I would like to see, I don't need to see what the confidential information is, what we are asking of the firm is the work being done. Mr. Nufrio stated the only thing I can say to that is if you look at the back-up, every call or discussion made

with either central office staff, Mr. Tatum or his designees or myself or someone I designated to be able to make that call – which is by policy is listed. Now you are raising another question that is the totality of the expense but bear in mind when Mr. Damato was the Board Secretary/Board Attorney he was paid a salary with benefits and yet we had law firms outside dealing with a lot of different issues and you know that as well as I do. In order to consolidate and to make sure that all of the issues were being resolved in the most legal fashion, we chose as a Board to do a third-party attorney/client situation which we have. If you look at the back-up, I don't think there is any question about the number of calls, who makes them, their names are listed – the amount of time is listed – if they are not you need to show that to me. Mr. Monge stated I will, anyone can look at it. Mr. Nufrio stated can I just finish my comment – if you are asking for a total, you have to be prepared to accept all of the legal aspects that the Sciarillo firm is handling and not just the cause that may be central or myself which have been limited in number – special education, all those are clearly delineated in the back-up.

Dr. Francis stated only in the back-up I only see the invoices total amount, I don't see the breakdown. Mr. Nufrio stated there is a breakdown. Mrs. Cappiello stated it is non-public. Mr. Monge stated let's just move on.

GRIEVANCE/NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE:

Mr. Arminio stated point of order, Dr. Francis was the chairperson. Mr. Nufrio stated with regards to the resolution. Mr. Arminio stated that is what I'm saying – point of order – he should be doing this because he was the one.

Moved by Dr. Francis, seconded by Mr. Arminio, that the following resolution be adopted:

G-1. APPROVE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT – UTEA

Approve Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Union Township Board of Education and the Union Township Education Association (UTEA) for the contract term September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2020, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Griggs stated we will call the six non-conflicted members and note that the following three members are conflicted: Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Higgins and Mrs. Minneci

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Monge, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Nufrio stated as a commentary as it was explained to me by Mr. Griggs – would you like to explain what will transpire in two weeks.

Mr. Griggs stated you approved the MOA and in two weeks you will be voting on the Collective Bargaining Agreement. At this point we are about done between the Association and

the Board in reviewing the Collective Bargaining Agreement which will contain a number of the terms and conditions in the MOA. At the time that we finish, the Board will vote on it and then the business office can move forward with payment of salaries and things of that nature.

Mr. Nufrio asked any questions on that? The MOA simply refers to the language.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Richardson presented the Operations Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION ITEM:

1. Letter from Township of Union requesting to renew partnership with Union High School for Great Inflatable Race and Food Truck Festival on May 12, 2018 and to use UHS parking lots and football field and track.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Arminio stated it has all been checked out – the dates are available. Mr. Tatum stated this was done last year. Mr. Benaquista stated it wasn't an inflatable last year – it was a lantern run. This benefits our project graduation. It is a great fundraiser and it helps them a lot.

It will be a resolution at the next meeting.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Moved by Mrs. Williams, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the following resolutions be adopted:

P-1. PERSONNEL ACTIONS

Personnel Actions be approved in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-2. APPROVE SUBSTITUTE LISTS

Approve Substitute Lists for the 2017-2018 school year in accordance with the information in the hands of each Board.

P-5. APPROVE DESIGNEE – STUDENT ACTIVITIES ACCOUNT

Approve Vincent Rettino as a designee for the ConnectOne “Hannah Caldwell Elementary School Student Activities Account,” at no cost to the District.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Nufrio

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Williams presented the Personnel Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Arminio stated if there is a question on P-6 (Mr. Vieira Contract) would that be asked in executive session? Mr. Nufrio stated questions pertaining to the contract yes. Mr. Griggs stated you have to rice him. Mr. Nufrio stated we would have to hold that until the 24th. Mr. Tatum can rice Mr. Viera. Mr. Nufrio stated any questions will be addressed in executive session once Mr. Tatum has had the opportunity to rice Mr. Vieira. Mr. Monge asked is there a timing reason it would have to be voted on next week? Mr. Tatum stated theoretically when this went on it was to go on with the other contracts so they could be done at one time but the other contracts require transmittal to the County Superintendent's office for approval before you can vote on them so they could be back by next week and you could vote on all of them. Mr. Griggs stated state who the other contracts are for. Mr. Tatum stated for the Assistant Superintendents and Business Administrator. Mr. Monge stated then it would be voted on after executive session. Mr. Benaquista stated we can hold them all off, rice all of us, and this way if there needs to be discussion – discuss it and vote on it after executive session. Mr. Nufrio stated that is only if they come back from the County Superintendent – which may or may not occur.

Mr. Monge stated is there a deadline to have them voted on next week. Mr. Griggs stated in terms of the tenure employees – no there is no deadline per say. You do need to tell a tenured employee that you are coming back next year because they have to be given an opportunity to say I don't want to come back – it doesn't happen. There is a deadline of June 1st on that. Mr. Monge stated it could be May, there is no magic. Mr. Griggs stated it could be sure. Lastly you did it in June.

Mr. Nufrio stated it is still the Superintendent's decision to place something on the agenda and if at the time you are reviewing the proposed contract and you wish not to vote on it, then certainly that is your prerogative.

Mr. Tatum stated if there are concerns that we discuss, there is more time if that answers your question Mr. Monge. I'm not sure if that is what you are looking for. Mr. Monge stated it was a general question.

Mr. Arminio stated there are a lot of retirees that have been around a long time. I will be talking about them at the next meeting. Mr. Benaquista stated we will be doing our end of the year retirements/recognitions.

RESIDENCY COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Williams presented the Residency Committee agenda.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Higgins stated we did a mock PARCC test with the Chromebook at Burnet and Kawameeh and they had some issues; they conducted the same test at the high school and they had some glitches but they worked them out. One of the things that we have been discussing and it is all contingent upon the budget but the phone system is very antiquated right now and we are looking to get either a super-duper security phone system but I think we need to get an

agency/consultant in to do an evaluation of the schools so that we would have a strategy in place but just the concern that it will take a long time and there should be interim steps.

Mr. Monge stated just to elaborate on that. When we met about the long-range facility plan we were talking about security measures. Security is obviously is a heightened priority – more so now than ever and we had talked about the idea of engaging security specialists that focus on schools and EI has someone that they work with in that capacity and the thought was we would have and Mr. Tatum we have had this conversation – you have someone come in and assess all that we can do in the District and one of those items we would surely assume is going to be communications but also it ends up being the cost of the security measures versus the cost of security measures and one of the biggest bangs for our buck maybe this telephone system. This telephone system was not just about technology, efficiency, it was also about security measures and the ability to connect all of our schools together, among many other things that you can do with the telephone system that we are talking about. That was taken out of the budget – it was reported at our committee discussion yesterday and we wanted to discuss the opportunity to potentially take another look at it – really not just as a telephone system, but a security system and I think we were talking about budgeting about \$200,000. Mr. Benaquista stated you are looking at about \$750,000 for a purchase.

Mrs. Paul stated it is \$250,000 – a lease purchase amount and it is an estimate that I have for putting in a phone system. It would be a 3-year lease – it would be \$250,000 per year. Mr. Brennan stated can we look at maybe financing it over 5 years. Mrs. Paul stated yes we can. Mr. Brennan stated the interest rates are lower. Mr. Nufrio stated it is not just \$250,000, it is recurring. Mrs. Paul stated I'm not the finance person so Mr. Brennan will you be able to find the right bank and to get us these. Mr. Brennan stated in the past we used the New Jersey Educational Services Commission which has financial institutions that are pre-bid and pre-qualified. It is a co-op. Mr. Nufrio stated I think I asked a long time ago if some of these ventures fall under capital and I thought I heard someone say – Mr. Brennan – say it was feasible. Mr. Brennan stated we will definitely look into seeing if it can come out of capital reserve. Mr. Nufrio stated the problem is we have other issues too – general budget. Mr. Brennan stated correct, which I will talk about later.

Mr. Monge stated so the thought was to have that in the budget but instead of again working in a vacuum that you have a comprehensive security analysis for the whole district that will look at various things that we can do to increase our security and then get a couple of additional benefits from it because obviously it is a telephone system and efficiency is technology.

Mrs. Higgins stated we would like to identify a few schools. Mrs. Paul stated a consultant would do that. When I spoke with EI today, he said when he meets with myself, Gerry, Barry and Mr. Ardito and when we all come up together, the consultant that he has will give us some recommendations of what school districts and I will report back to you on what he says and if we go there and see what is there or it just means a conversation I have with their director or whoever or Mr. Brennan has a conversation with their BA regarding it we will report back.

Mr. Benaquista stated the first thing that we are doing and it was approved months ago was using some of our grant money to redo our emergency plan and that is step one. The same company if we like their product, does assessments – one gentleman is head of security at St. Peter’s University and the other gentleman and they are both retired from the police force or other agencies, they came highly recommended. They are working right now on our emergency plan and updating that. They are going to condense it and make it easier for staff. After that is complete, we can talk about them or another company doing an assessment. I also met with principals, Mr. Tatum and Mrs. Moses on their concerns – each building is different and I am compiling a report and hopefully done by May – some ideas and I do agree we need a 3-5 year plan on security. We have to talk about how many doors have access, notifications to those doors. Me and Mrs. Paul have been talking about some things but we really do need to get experts to look at ours because ours is different and come up with a game plan and a ballpark estimate of how much it is going to cost us. I think we are doing a good job in security but I think we need to take that next step and it will take some financial backing but it is important for the safety of our employees and our kids.

Mrs. Higgins stated we have manual security not the technology. Mr. Benaquista stated I think we overcompensate our relationship and our trainings that we do with our Town for immediate response but if we can get more of those other things that can lock the building down in seconds off of a swipe on your phone which is there or notifications outside the building so the public knows we are in a lockdown and they can’t enter. I am going to a five-day training at the end of June as the security assessment officer. I have to be FEMA trained as well as this training at the end of the year. I am sure I will learn a lot that they will start mandating on districts.

Mr. Monge stated we would ask for that consideration Mr. Tatum and your team as it pertains to that item in the budget because I don’t know if we wait a year and half. Mr. Benaquista stated I was going to try to present something sooner rather than later even if it is not a full 5-year plan. We have to get companies to start giving us some ideas.

Mr. Monge stated the phone system, it is more than a phone, it is above and beyond that and we should also consider. Mr. Tatum stated as Mrs. Higgins mentioned the antiquated system that we have in place right now I’m afraid to tell you who brought that into the District, he was the Assistant Superintendent at the time he did – it is yours truly. It is 12 years old.

Mr. Nufrio stated it always nice to plan but we need the money. Mr. Brennan you need to start getting creative.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Bills will be approved next week.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated just to get an update from Mr. Tatum or Mrs. Moses on the pre-k program for the 2018-2019 school year. Mr. Tatum stated we have had some discussions about the pre-k program and we are looking at possibly doing it at three schools right now. In consideration of some of the concerns that we have with the budget, many of our pre-k teachers who are working full time are moonlighting as AP teachers which means that we actually have

the manpower and which means we should have the space. The only thing that we are concerned about is as we start to do this pilot program, what the numbers are going to skyrocket to. We still need to set rates and we are in the process of discussion right now and consider budgetary concerns and trying to continue to move the District in a more progressive direction.

My thought is we are probably going to have more than we would normally get as a half day. I think that is something parents have been looking for and we talked the other day and what happens is we have a student that attends pre-k in morning or afternoon and parents are looking for us to transport them to another location otherwise their day is disrupted. Now what we are looking at might be more feasible to parents because they will be in one location. We just have to make sure everything is in place. We will be giving more information on that as we move forward and see where we are with the budget and what space we have in the buildings.

Mr. Monge stated is there a carrying course with the program or is it breakeven? Mr. Tatum stated I think it might bring in some revenue. Mr. Monge stated if we are able to do that it really shouldn't be an issue. Mr. Tatum stated I think we have the staff to make this happen. As I mentioned some of our full-time teachers were teaching that and half of something else as additional support. Now they would be able to account their whole day on the pre-k.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I don't know if Mr. Brennan knows this, but with the new Governor he allocated \$57 million dollars for 4-year olds to have access to pre-k. This is something that we should follow-up on because there is money out there. Mr. Brennan stated o.k.

Mr. Tatum stated I think the one you are talking about actually provides a free pre-k. It is not a tuition. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated it is still something to look into.

One more, I think since last year I have been talking about the writing curriculum to meet the needs of the students, especially for State standards and the three kinds of writing that K-5 and up to the high school because there are writing standards for the high school too – I wanted to know what is the District's plans for incorporating new writing curriculum, especially K-5 for the 2018-2019 school year and if something is in the works and what is happening with that.

Mrs. Moses stated I met with the supervisors of elementary, ELA, science, social studies, ELA supervisors of secondary and social studies supervisor and what we are doing right now and looking at elementary we are looking at the schedule because writing needs to take place every day. I contacted the State and the State is implementing a certification for teachers throughout New Jersey and teachers will be able to take this assessment throughout the year and get a certification from the State of New Jersey. The State has recognized that there is an issue with writing in the State of New Jersey with our students. They put together a platform where teachers can get certified and that platform should be released soon.

We are implementing our new reading and writing series. We will put in another program with relevance to the issues that kids do today with a novel and writing. The reason why we are moving on to communication skills with the writing and like a Ted Talk where kids present and navigate while they talk the room and engage the audience because that is really

important today because we know kids will be using that style of communication and written communication. That is on the works and we will present it to the Education Committee. We will set up a date and have all staff that are presenting come in and present to the committee.

Mr. Nufrio stated Mrs. Moses, the courses that the State is going to be offering – will that be available to all grade levels? Mrs. Moses stated grade level K-5. Whenever you go to a workshop with the State, it doesn't give you just that – sometimes you have to think about – in high school you may have a student writing on a low level but you need to know these skills. It will be opened up to everyone but definitely K-5. Mr. Nufrio stated but someone from middle school or high school wouldn't be denied if they wanted to take the course. Mrs. Moses stated absolutely because there are always skills you can take to any level. You have the ability to move it up or move it down.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated one last thing – we already know if the kids come late to school they do have access to a breakfast but I just wanted to update that the State is now calling it “breakfast after the bell”. I know the kids usually go to the nurses office but right now they are renaming it “breakfast after the bell” and the kids still have access to breakfast. Mrs. Moses stated if a child is hungry, we should be feeding them. In this District, as long as I have been here, any time a child is not feeling well, we have them go to the nurse and usually 99.9% of the time the nurse will ask if they ate breakfast and if the child did not eat breakfast, they would say let's get you something to eat. It is good to even know in high school – across the district and in New Jersey that are homeless, have hardships in families and because of that we do have Title I schools and this is fact that kids that are not in the Title I school during the summer can attend a Title I program in another school. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated we are mandated by State law to report if any kid is not afforded breakfast.

Mr. Nufrio stated the “after the bell” Mrs. Darby can you expound on that as to what that actually translates to. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated any kid that comes at 8:45, 9:05 – they are allowed to have breakfast if they haven't eaten. It is usually the nurses office and I think that will still be in place. Mr. Nufrio stated it will be an excused late arrival. Mr. Tatum stated the traditional program ran from a certain time to a certain time and then it was done and you missed out on it. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated especially for our change of population of students that we have so it makes sense.

Mr. Arminio stated April 26th – fundraiser at Tiff's for Friends of the Union Public Library and the reason I'm mentioning that because they are co-sponsoring with the Town Library and school district to run the ELL summer program. The teachers are creating the program, the library is supplying the advertisement and space at the library during the summer and the Friends of the Public Library are paying for the teachers during the summer and it will be open to all ELL kids. It will be nine weeks during the summer. It is going to be a fabulous way to have these kid continue through the summer. They have to sign up for it. Many of those ELL students have gotten a library card. According to the Director Karen O'Malley, more ELL parents are bringing their kids to the library. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated they are going to change ELL to ENL.

Mr. Arminio stated May 23rd is the date selected by the Superintendent for Ted Jakobowski for the renaming of the auditorium which will take place at Jefferson School – 6:30 p.m.

June 2nd is fast approaching and our team is called CORE and we are going to be walking for Relay for Life. Hopefully you will donate some money.

If you are looking for museum passes – you have to go under the Community tab. How can you pass up going to one to nine museums around the State for free, even the Grounds for Sculpture?

Mrs. Minneci stated April 23rd they are doing a jazzed up for autism at O’Lauger and it is a night of awareness, music and food - \$5 of the cost per person gets donated to the awareness group.

On April 28th it is give or drop a buck for awareness marathon and it is throughout the day. Residents are invited to Cooke Field and walk around the track and each lap that they walk they can drop a dollar in the barrel as a donation to either Autism of New Jersey or Autism Speaks at the Children’s Specialized Hospital.

Mr. Monge stated the demographic studies – the gentleman did leave out the development on Green Lane. Is he going to update? Mr. Brennan stated I haven’t heard back from him. I will reach out to Rich. Mr. Monge stated we need to get that updated. I think they are going all rental. Mr. Tatum stated I think that changes the impact statement. Mr. Monge stated he did say there was going to be an impact change and he was going to update the report so we have to follow up with him.

Did the small gym lights get done? Mr. Loessel stated done.

Mr. Monge stated the Honors and AP Evaluation – the rubric – I have heard chatter as it pertains to that. One of the things that we will have to take into consideration is that PARCC is on there and we got this letter from the Governor or the Department of Education saying that they are going to be going away from PARCC so I think we should start thinking about that. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated it is PARCC or an alternative assessment. Mr. Benaquista stated if PARCC goes something else has to take its spot. Mr. Monge stated that is something to keep on the radar.

The G&T classes are out in Philadelphia and Mr. Petras had a bad accident and he broke something and that man is out there with some type of cast and went out to Philadelphia to be with the kids. I don’t know what kind of recognition or award – commitment and dedication – unbelievable. Mr. Tatum stated I have worked with him before and he is very diligent.

Mr. Monge stated we were at the fundraiser at Applebees on Sunday and his father said he wouldn’t listen to him and he will be out there and there he was. Kudos to Mr. Petras.

The budget – we thought it was important that we have a general snapshot of where we are today, what the process is to ultimately vote later on this month but wanted to give a high level presentation. We will meet on Friday and we have a bunch of questions but ultimately we would probably get another update next week. Has anybody reached out to you about your workshop? Mr. Brennan stated no.

Mr. Monge stated we still have the opportunity to get as educated as possible but maybe you can give a high level update.

Mr. Brennan stated I met with many of the Board members individually and talked about the budget yesterday with Mr. Nufrio and Mrs. Minneci and today was with the combined Operation/Finance Committee but if you go back to the planning session that we had I gave a brief budget process and overview and I did start to tell you that we do have some real challenges this year. Like I said in my presentation and to reiterate and then I'll go over some numbers.

We have a significant shortfall in our revenue this year. Our excess surplus from 15-16 which went to revenue 17-18 which was \$6.1 million dropped to \$1.4 million which was at the end of 16-17 school year and it is automatic – by statute any excess surplus goes to your revenue. It is populated into your budget software automatically – so we are down \$6 million in revenue.

On the flip side of that, our increase in appropriations and expenses, if everything else stayed the same was an additional \$6 million and that equates to the benefits increase which is almost \$3 million – 15.8% which will go down to 11.8% once we ratify the contract because we are going from a Direct Access 20 to a 15 and that will save the District money and the employees money.

The increase in special services - \$2 million a year and also the increase in salaries which is approximately \$2 million. I want to reiterate some other things from that planning session. Thirty-five percent of our \$130 million operating budget has been flat for at least five years so that is a snowball affect where appropriations are outpacing the revenues coming in and the State aide levy because it is zero. This year we got \$1.4 million which helped a little bit because Governor Murphy increased transportation aid by \$1.4 million.

I talked about the decrease in excess surplus. Our tax levy increase of 2% is only on \$87 million of the \$130 million so it is only 2% on 65% of our budget which only equates to \$1.7 million. If you do the math it is 1.3 % over the total operating budget. Clearly we are in a hole and it is tough times and no way to sugar coat it. The administrators – we have been working diligently to try and balance the budget which we did. It was sent to the County and waiting for approval on that.

Also additional salaries such as overtime, substitutes, class coverages – that all amounts and eats up the budget too. Balancing the budget cuts were discussed and made in areas where there was an overage in staffing in areas that are not required by State mandates and that is all departments districtwide and also through attrition – retirements and that causes salary breakage. It has been a rough couple of months but we are where we are and we are working hard with the

administration and the Board to come up with a responsible budget without affecting the education of our children.

Mr. Nufrio stated when you said you forwarded a balance budget, it was not balanced. Mr. Brennan stated to the State it is balanced. Mr. Nufrio stated but it is still showing the deficit. Mr. Brennan stated it is balanced – appropriations and revenues have to equal. Mr. Nufrio stated but we are still in the hole irrespective of that. Mr. Brennan stated because we balanced the budget we are in the hole compared to this year.

Mr. Monge stated to offer additional color to the revenue piece. School budget language versus layman terms – if we have money left over at the end of the year and there is a surplus calculation that gets taken out where you have \$2 million set aside that we can go ahead and use; whatever is remaining gets sent to two years down the road to “revenue”. That particular year where we underbudget, historically we always had that revenue line of a surplus. We carried this revenue – we called it surplus but at the end we still had money left over so historically we were just shifting the money over. What happened last year, we actually spent the money more so than the historic years so we had a budget and we spent the money. We were still under budget but not as under budgeted as we have been. 2018-2019 we have \$1.5 million of surplus and what Mr. Brennan is saying this budget we’re working off of a \$6 million. What is going to be left at the end of this year – the tricky part that we keep talking about – right now in our F-2 we have unrealized expenditures of about \$4.5 million. A couple of months ago we were at \$7 million and of that \$2 million is going to one time hit retro salary but technically it would have been \$2 million left over under budget but now we have \$4 million and change and I said this the last time, we should stop spending to make sure that we have money left over as much as we possibly can for two years down.

There was a presentation I have been asking for – we got it a couple of times and it is a great presentation but we have to do it monthly. It is a great example for everybody. It says what we voted on for the 17-18 budget and where we are today. One of the things that came out in our call for technology, when I looked at the presentation – technology had a budget of \$850,000 when we look at our F-2 it says the budget is a \$1.035 million. As Board members we say well the budget is \$1 million – we voted on \$850,000 budget so there is money that has been transferred to that line. Mrs. Regis-Darby asked where is it coming from. Mr. Brennan stated the transfers are approved every month. Mr. Monge stated what is unfair and this is what I have been saying for a couple of years, we are approving transfers but it is pages and pages of transfers and we don’t understand how that relates to the budget that we approve.

When you talk about next year’s budget for technology, I look at it and it is \$800 and something thousand dollars. I’m just using this as an example but she spent a \$1 million and that doesn’t include the \$200,000 for the phone. There is nothing that we have a reference point. If someone is at \$500,000 budget but spent \$2 million, we don’t see that reference. Who is over budget, who is under budget. Mr. Brennan stated you just need that report. Mr. Monge stated I think everybody needs to see that to be able to understand the cuts and where they are coming from and how it compares to what we approve and what we are actually spending this year.

Mr. Tatum stated it goes back to the original appropriations and that money being over spent and I have said on more than one occasion over the last two years and then those funds become underfunded and then you go around trying to find the money that you moved from those lines. I heard Greg saying those transfers are being approved because you created an expenditure which you didn't budget enough money for and so of course that expenditure has to be approved because you have a bill sitting in front of you. Unfortunately, you have a budget that shows original appropriations and all of a sudden those numbers start to shift and they go from one account to another account. What I think is happening we come up with a budget that has an original dollar amount and all of sudden those things change and unfortunately what happens is when we underfund and overspend it creates a deficit and that is what has been happening the last couple of years.

Mr. Monge stated the presentation we get there is no way for anyone here to figure that out unless they did all the craziness I need to be able to figure it out. Now that we have this presentation and it is a very good presentation, but it should be part of our monthly. Mr. Brennan stated Manny is supposed to be uploading it tomorrow as a monthly thing. I told him that. You witnessed me telling him tonight. He will do it tomorrow and we will get it to you. Mr. Monge stated Mr. Brennan has been requesting that but that is something I think when it gets sent out you will see what we voted on – all these transfers and what the adjusted budget is and then it is also going to show what we have appropriated – the money that we are planning to spend before the end of the fiscal year and then what is left over.

What I was saying Mr. Tatum is we have to stop spending. Mr. Tatum stated the spending was cut off. Mr. Brennan stated the spending was cut off in December; however, except for special services, technology and buildings and grounds because it is an ongoing operation.

Mrs. Richardson stated I really think that the problem is that we used the excess surplus for items that needed to be repaired – capital improvements. It has come out of the surplus. Mr. Monge stated no. Mr. Brennan stated we never used any money any surplus.

Mrs. Richardson stated when you have your budget and at the end of the year you have extra money and then it goes into surplus and then it goes into capital. Mr. Nufrio stated it all comes from the same pot.

Mr. Monge stated you have to move money into capital reserves. Mr. Brennan stated otherwise it flows to revenue two years down the road. Mr. Monge stated it is two different types of money. Mrs. Richardson stated it is two different types of money but it is from the same place. Mr. Tatum stated there would be money generated as surplus not capital – if the money was appropriated originally and that money was spent on that particular rather than going to areas and scraping money to re-pad those lines I think we would see the generation of surplus – maybe not that much but from areas that may have been unexpended for the fact that the other lines were done appropriately and that money was then left over in those accounts but unfortunately what is happening now we are getting hit by those underfunded and those expenditures for example, out-of-district tuition. I was on the phone with the County about this yesterday and when you have a child in a school, there has to be money in the budget for the

child to be in school. We know there are other contingencies there but our in-district tuition has outpaced our out-of-district tuition and usually it is the other way around so that is another issue we have to grapple with. One of the things that the County is saying to us you have to start rethinking on how these programs are put together because unfortunately right now you are outpacing and you are probably spending more money in-district than out-of-district. You would probably have a better pot to work from if you maintain some of those out-of-district placements because right now you are spending more money trying to keep students who would probably be in a better placement in-district.

Mr. Monge stated which is crazy because that is how we started out. Mr. Tatum stated Greg isn't that what we heard yesterday. Mr. Brennan stated yes and the mid-year review. Mr. Tatum stated we also heard it again yesterday.

Mr. Nufrio stated the balanced budget has been forwarded – I want you to clarify what that meant – it takes into account how it is going to be reconciled. You don't reconcile by just shifting numbers, you reconcile by reducing your expenditures. You at least let the public know what it is that they will expect to see. Mr. Brennan stated like I said before, there are going to be cuts across districtwide. Mr. Nufrio stated cuts meaning positions. Mr. Brennan stated reduction in force. Mr. Nufrio stated central is doing whatever they can to minimize that impact but it is inevitable and there are other mitigating circumstances that impacted that which has to do with the classroom assistants. It is not an easy resolve. It is not an easy solution. It is a hard pill to swallow but in fact it is reality and if the County approves the budget they expect those things to occur. You can't just say we are going to do this and then the next month not.

Mr. Tatum stated what I explained to them is simply this. Although right now we may be talking x, y and z positions to get us there but that doesn't mean that is going to be there could be more actual. It is a dollar amount. Mr. Nufrio stated there will be some change and flexibility. Mr. Tatum stated we have been rethinking that. Mr. Nufrio stated when you sent it in Mr. Tatum what was the number that they expected. Mr. Tatum stated \$6 million. Mr. Nufrio stated \$6 million but translating to how many possible positions? Mr. Tatum stated 146. Mr. Nufrio stated which is a floating number and susceptible to change based on attrition and everything else. It has gone down to below 100.

Just like before it is wonderful to dream about all these new innovative projects and ventures but here we are, we can't afford the soda. Mr. Tatum stated our priority is to keep our teachers.

Mr. Monge stated the other line example is custodial services so I saw a historical trend of maybe \$800-\$900,000 and then we had a budgeted amount of \$1 million and that was a million dollar figure done for this year as well so things like that where we have over budgeted lines and we continue to do it – we need to correct those lines. If you are correcting that \$200,000 and putting it into teacher salaries then you are saving some decisions as it pertains to making sure that you are correcting those line items.

The last thing Mr. Tatum is the capital project line and we will have that conversation on Friday. What we have done historically; we have been able to build a capital reserve line

because we had this surplus. Mr. Brennan stated we also had the money left over from Jefferson. Mr. Monge stated that was a big number but even the original \$5 million was built up through under budgeting – that is where the money came from. If we don't have that, we talked about approving this \$1 million but if we can't replenish that capital projects line, then we have to consider that million dollar budget that we have there because you don't want to go into next year 18-19 with \$400,000.

Mr. Nufrio stated we also have to comply with the fact that the State expects us to hold about 2% surplus in both capital and general funds. We are not even close to that. Mr. Monge stated we have the million capital project. Mr. Brennan stated we have \$500,000 for emergency reserve. We are there. Mr. Nufrio stated we are still short. You can't say we have we are still short. We are below the threshold.

Mr. Monge asked what is the threshold – 2%? Mr. Brennan stated \$2.5 million. Mr. Monge stated right now we have in our reserves a \$1 million which is separate and apart from the other. We do have that. Mr. Nufrio stated let's be clear about this – we are not in compliance with the mandated 2%. Mr. Monge stated that is not true. Mr. Nufrio stated you are saying it is not true but he is saying it was – what can I tell you here. Mr. Brennan stated that is including capital reserve.

Mr. Monge stated today we are in compliance and we have to make sure that we don't go out of compliance. Mr. Nufrio stated I'm going to respectfully disagree; that is not what we were told yesterday. Mr. Brennan you need to clarify that. Mr. Brennan stated the \$2.5 here is made up here on this spreadsheet that you are looking at. It is \$1.5 in surplus and then \$1.1 in capital reserve and that is not what you are talking about. Mr. Nufrio stated what am I talking about because now you got me confused. Mr. Brennan stated that is surplus. We are talking about the million dollars in reserves and then \$500,000 in emergency reserves. Mr. Nufrio stated that doesn't add up to 2%. Mr. Brennan stated no it doesn't. Mr. Nufrio stated that is what I'm saying. Do 2% of the budget and you get...Mr. Monge stated assuming you spend the million dollars.

Mrs. Richardson stated historically has it worked out that way. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated can't this be discussed in the budget meeting? Mr. Brennan stated we will discuss this on Friday.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC:

Anne Margaret Shannon stated you mentioned the phones and I want to put a plug for the employees of UHS because there are about 200 staff for 2500 kids we literally we have one designated phone to call parents. I know we can borrow secretaries phones and we do but if you can look into a system where the classroom phones actually dial out to parents, it would be awesome for communication with parents. I know it will probably be expensive but I'm throwing it in the wish list. Mr. Benaquista stated it is already something that me and Mrs. Paul talked about throughout the District.

Ms. Shannon stated Mr. Arminio you spoke about a program for ELL – you mentioned the teacher’s created curriculum, the library has done publicity and space and the friends of the library are going to pay the teachers and I would offer that any time you guys do any kind of community event, NJEA has something called pride in public education and if you want inspired books, or invite teachers or whenever you do anything with the community, please invite the UTEA to be part of it. Mr. Arminio stated you are invited.

Ms. Shannon stated Megan Deluca is our pride chair so if anyone has any ideas, you can call her directly. I wanted to thank the people here in purple – our negotiations team. Thank you for coming.

Cathy Sharpe stated I came here tonight, I was very pleased. I saw a proposal, Memorandum of Agreement – I was even happier yet that everybody said yes to it but now I’m very confused and maybe Mr. Griggs can unconfuse me. I have been on at least 8-9 negotiation teams. We get a Memorandum of Agreement, we sign off that night, it goes to the Board to approve it, it goes to the Association to approve it. We both approve it and that is it and that is the end. Tonight I’m hearing well we still have another vote on that in two weeks. Why I am confused is the Memorandum of Agreement that is in the hands of all of you contains all the changes that were made in the contract. Any change whatsoever had to be in that Memorandum of Agreement that we signed off. It also includes all the salary guides which we sent to Mr. Griggs. Mr. Griggs approved them so I’m assuming they are right. It also includes all the clubs that we said we would do in the spring and Mr. Griggs had questions about. He wanted it done. We sat thanks to Mr. Tatum two full afternoons. Mr. Tatum and part of my team sat and we went through every club in the District. We got information from your accountants. How much is this one paid, how much is that one paid. We cleared all that out and we gave a clean copy of that. We sent that to Mr. Griggs. There is nothing left. Your side is asking for a second approval – what are you approving.

Mr. Griggs stated in the past it appears your groups have actually started paying money off of the Memorandum of Agreement and that is like a bridge agreement between the two board committees and that is not authority to pay salaries to teachers. What is authority is this Board of Education approving the Collective Bargaining Agreement - all the terms and conditions of employment. I do realize that a lot of those terms and conditions existed in the previous CBA which expired but until both groups approve the entire agreement, that is what needs to be approved so it is a two-step process. Any place in our experience and our firm’s experience, we bargained, we approve the MOA and then the parties move forward. This was a little different because there was co-curricular at the end but if you move that out of the way for one second, we would have gone from the MOA to the drafting of the Collective Bargaining Agreement which would have been sent to your group, you would look at it and as I have done since last Monday-Tuesday going back and forth and once the Association was satisfied with the terms and conditions and our side was good with it and then you move forward to do the whole document.

The other part is that what I saw when I came here that there were some errors in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and what I also saw what appears in the past that this Board passed an MOA and they started paying salaries off the MOA; that is not the way it is done because that is not the agreement between the parties – that is the agreement between the

negotiations committees – the Board group and the Association group. It is essentially a temporary agreement which puts in the changes to the Collective Bargaining Agreement, different salary guides and that type of thing. Then you go into the Agreement and you have the final agreement. That is why we approved the MOA tonight. I fully expect to hear back from your folks by the end of the week or soon that the agreement that they have in their hands is fine and the schedules. The language – I did receive an email from Rich which said that there are some typos in this agreement. We took the original agreement and downloaded it and then we changed areas of the agreement relative to the Memorandum of Agreement. We left the language just the way it is because once you settle everything else remains the same. We didn't deal with typos or capitalization or something like that. The other plus side to this, it is an opportunity to clean up the agreement so you have a real clear agreement and there are no errors in it. If you take a look at your expired agreement and look at some of the schedules, they have the wrong headings on them.

Our process is to approve the MOA and it is a little different because we had the caveat at the end where we had to do co-curricular but other than that the intern agreement is the MOA and from that we build the Collective Bargaining Agreement – both parties sign off and then you have an agreement between the parties. That is why it is that way. I think in the past it is being done wrong. You cannot pay salaries and stuff like that off a Memorandum of Agreement.

When we looked at the administrators agreement, it was an agreement with all mark-ups and that was the only agreement that this District had and I have never seen anything like that before. It is a clean agreement now.

That is the rationale and explanation of why it is done the way it is. Again the MOA that is only between the two committees; that is not between the Board of Education and the Association and once they vote on it they are voting on the MOA conditions and then it goes to the Collective Bargaining Agreement and then we finalize it and we are done.

Mr. Benaquista stated I can attest that the past associations that we did – it was a two-part approval system. When Mr. Griggs arrived the first thing he said to us and it was negotiations with administrators, he said we were doing it wrong and I said this is what has been done in the past and he said it is wrong.

Mr. Griggs stated the MOA says retroactive salary payments, salary adjustments, stipends adjustments, adjustments of compensation items, if any, shall be retroactive September 1st and shall not be made earlier than 30 days after the final Collective Bargaining Agreement with salary guides and signed by representatives of the Board and the Association and each party has received a signed copy of it – that is in the MOA under paragraph 9 so that explains what I am talking about right now. It is in the MOA.

Richard D'Avanzo stated UTEA Vice President – a couple of questions – on the top of the MOA it says MOA between the Union Township Board of Education and the Union Township Education Association – so does that not represent the Board of Ed not just the committee. Mr. Griggs stated your committee signed off on it. The committee doesn't have legal authority to sign a collective bargaining agreement. You sign as a member of the

committee – your negotiations committee. It was not signed as corporate officers it was signed as members of the committee. Talk to your colleagues around the State and you will find this is normal.

The way this process works is you are moving through the negotiations and you have seen where we have done tentative agreement where we are able to capture and agree on 3-4 items and then we incorporate it into a final agreement.

Mr. D'Avanzo stated on the last page where we did sign off – it says on behalf of the Association. Mr. Griggs stated it is not signed by the corporate officers. This is not approved by your Association. In terms of the final CBA, we need for your guys to sign off on this and then it goes into the CBA. When there is an issue here, where we go with both parties is to see what we can do and can't do is the collective bargaining agreement – that is your agreement between the parties; it is not the MOA – there is no grievance process in the MOA. There is no beginning that the school day starts and ends – so where you go is the CBA and that is the document that needs to ultimately be approved. I can't make it any simpler.

Mr. D'Avanzo stated over the time from December to March and my colleagues spoke at the last Board meeting about some of these issues that seem to be holding up the process and not being communicated. I understand the point about the MOA and the CBA but like Cathy said for years what we were doing and your firm does it differently. Mr. Griggs stated we don't do it differently we do it the way the rest of the world does it.

Mr. D'Avanzo stated if you look at #3 – it says all portions of the most recently expired contract and not modified by the terms of this Memorandum shall continue to be in full force and affect and be carried out and incorporated into the September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2020 contract. Mr. Griggs stated but what about the other 300 terms and conditions which are contained in the CBA – are you saying that is the only agreement between the parties? Mr. D'Avanzo stated that is not what I'm saying. Mr. Griggs stated by extension that is what you are saying.

Anne Margaret Shannon stated its says the portions that are not expired shall continue – right here. Mr. Griggs stated you have been down the road before, talk to George Huck. Ms. Shannon stated he has been doing it the same for the past 20 years. Mr. D'Avanzo stated I'm not saying you are wrong. Mr. Griggs stated we bargain with George in a lot of places – same process. Ms. Shannon stated we are just saying in the 25 years I have been in this District, have we taken two votes. Mr. Griggs stated I'm saying you did it wrong. Mr. Benaquista stated we are recognizing that and that is why the other associations changed the process. When we notice something is done wrong we change it.

Mr. Griggs stated I don't know what you don't know. Nobody said to me - I conjectured based upon these other groups. Ms. Shannon stated somewhere along the way you told your Board because they never voted twice before either. Mr. Griggs stated most of these people were not on the Board. Ms. Shannon stated you lost all the savings on the health benefits and all the taxpayers lost the savings. Mr. Griggs stated I think the reality is the benefits have gone up more than had been contemplated.

Mr. Monge stated as it pertains to the delay and the health benefits, there is a correlation between the two right? Is it in fact costing us money the more that we wait? Mr. Griggs stated I need to talk about that in executive session.

Susan Lipstein stated I have spent two hours here today. The Ed Foundation grants for next year will be announced and we have some really terrific programs that we are funding. Our spring reception will be on May 20th at the Knights of Columbus.

I also spent two hours at the Ethics Training and it was really excellent. One thing I did notice and I would like to point out is I was following the Code of Ethics of the Township in its policy and it is different from the School Board's current and you may want the Policy Committee to take a look at it.

I took one note and it said conduct of members of both Boards of Education and local administrators need to hold due respect for each other. To hold the confidence and respect of the people, I think when we get to a point when nobody really knows what the answer is just hold back and some of the behavior that I saw tonight – I get upset when there is conflict and I don't think we need to have that and I'm just stating that. We had a whole meeting on how important it is to behave in a certain way. I don't always behave in that certain way but I think we really need to start working together and when we come to an impasse, let's take a breath and figure out what it is because going back and forth is not solving the issue at all. I sincerely hope we take that into consideration and listen to one another and fix the problem. I will be very happy to see what is happening with the budget. None of us wants to see cuts.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Mr. Monge, that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss the following subject matters without the presence of the public in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-2b.

- Matters involving collective bargaining agreement negotiations and/or the negotiations of terms and conditions of employment.
- Pending or anticipated litigation, contract negotiation and matters falling under the attorney-client privilege.
- Matters involving employees and terms of their employment and contract.

The Board will disclose the discussion conducted during the executive session, with notice to the public, when the disclosure will not result in unwarranted invasion of individual privacy or prejudice to the best interests of the Board of Education and provided that such disclosure does not violate federal, state or local statutes and does not fall within the attorney/client privilege.

All present voting YES.

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 11:25 p.m.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mrs. Darby, seconded by Mrs. Williams, that the meeting be adjourned at 11:25 p.m. All present voting YES MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

GREGORY E. BRENNAN
BOARD SECRETARY