

**Rochelle Park Board of Education  
Caucus Meeting Minutes - 7:30 P.M.  
April 1, 2013**

- I. Call to Order and Flag Salute**
- II. Roll Call**

Board Members	Present	Absent
Mr. Jay Esposito, Vice President		X (arrived 7:35)
Mr. Sam Allos	X	
Mrs. Teresa Cravello	X	
Mrs. Maria Lauerman		X(arrived 7:35)
Mrs. Dimitria Leakas	X	
Mr. Mark Scully	X	
Mrs. Patricia Bilka, President	X	

Others present:

- Bert Ammerman, Interim Superintendent
- Vincent Occhino, Interim Business Administrator/Bd. Secretary
- Cara Hurd, Principal
- Ellen Kobylarz, Board Recording Secretary

**III. Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, and P. L. 1975 Announcement – by Board President**

In accordance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, I wish to announce that:

“The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. Notices announcing the date, time and place for this Regular Meeting were sent to all concerned individuals, associations and sent to the, The Record and Our Town, in accordance with Chapter 231, P.L. 1975.

**IV. Superintendent’s Report** Mr. Ammerman reported the following:

- There will be a resolution to approve workshops for Ms. Vafegh (NJSHA 2013 Conference), Mrs. O’Rourke (Common Core Mathematics standards) , Mrs. Hurd and Mr. Ammerman to attend the 2013 SNAP Conference. *Mrs. Cravello asked what accounts the money for these workshops will be taken from.* Mr. Ammerman explained that one workshop will come out of Title I and the others are workshops that were budgeted for.
- There will be a resolution to approve several field trips- Kindergarten to Abma’s Farm, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade to the Newark Museum, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade to see a play “Ramona Quimby”, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and 5<sup>th</sup> Grades Liberty Science Center. *Mr. Scully inquired about the bus for Kindergarten.* Mrs. Hurd explained that one of the parents is connected to the company. She doesn’t know if they own the company or work there but it is a bus company that is providing the transportation.
- The DARE Graduation will be held on Thursday April 25, 2013.

**V. Business Administrator’s Report** Dr. Occhino reported the following:

- Dr. Occhino informed the board of a meeting he had with Mr. Koch; the engineer who is working with the administration on the energy audit. Dr. Occhino will be asking the board tonight to pass a resolution which is the next step in this process. This will allow the district to move through the first phase. The next is to update the facilities plan in the new budget. It is now a requirement to tell the state how much money is set aside to accomplish the goals set forth in the facilities plan. Mr. Koch will assist with that update.
- Dr. Occhino stated that the district has started to address some critical issues. The Academic program has been addressed so we need to switch our focus to the facilities. The addendum that Dr. Occhino is proposing is a boiler plate. One question the committee had was an amount of \$100,000. Currently we do not have that amount in reserve and that is what the resolution is resolving.
- The final item that Dr. Occhino explained to the Board was the disclosure statements that all board members need to complete each year.

**VI. Principal's Report** Mrs. Hurd reported the following:

- Focus school update which includes 10 classroom walkthroughs per week by the Principal, Teacher feedback and noted trends. Mrs. Hurd created a newsletter highlighting events and happenings. Newsletters will be issued at end of March and June. Teachers will meet in grade level PLCs to analyze formative and summative assessment data such as NJASK scores, diagnostic tests, benchmark and assessments.
- Mrs. Hurd has sent out a parent survey to 100 randomly picked parents. Once the surveys are returned, Mrs. Hurd will form a group of Parents & Teachers to address the results of the surveys. *Vice President Esposito inquired as to how the parents were picked for the survey.* Mrs. Hurd explained that they were picked at random. *Mr. Scully asked how it was sent out.* Mr. Ammerman explained that although the district is trying to go paperless, some items need to be mailed and the survey was an example of an item that was mailed. Not all parents have signed up for the e-mail system. Every event that we have, if people say they didn't know, we direct them to the e-mail list and ask that they sign up.
- The book fair was a great success; Mrs. Hurd thanked all the PTA volunteers for their time during that week. Mrs. Hurd also reported that with the money raised in the form of "Scholastic Dollars", the district purchased two Smart Boards for the School.
- Announcements: Spring Concert will be held on Thursday April 4<sup>th</sup>- morning shows will be held on Thursday and Friday for students. Spring recess will be April 10-12
- Parent/Teacher conferences will take place on Wednesday April 24<sup>th</sup> from 1:30-3:00 and 7:00 to 9:30 PM Mrs. Hurd explained a new procedure for this year's conferences. *Vice President Esposito asked if a letter goes home if a student is failing.* Mr. Ammerman explained that a procedure is in place that the teacher calls the parent if the child is failing.
- The DARE graduation is scheduled for April 25<sup>th</sup>.

**VII. Reports – Committee Action Items**

Finance- *President Bilka stated that Dr. Occhino in his report covered the finance piece.*  
Education- *Mrs. Lauerman – relayed to the board information obtained from a meeting she had along with Mrs. Leakas and several teachers. Issues that came at that meeting had to do with scheduling, more teacher input, and more technology in the classroom. Mrs. Lauerman and Mrs. Leakas then met with Mr. Ammerman to discuss these issues. Mr. Ammerman addressed the issues as follows; with regard to scheduling, the*

administration understands that there are issues in the schedule. They will attempt to correct for next year. Part of the problem is class sections and class size. Teachers liked the block schedules; however, it's not always feasible with the number of students. Second issue: more teacher input. The administration welcomes input from the teachers. Last year the district was able to purchase new textbooks, Mrs. Repka was instrumental in picking out the Language Arts series; Mrs. Raimondi looked at the Math series and Mr. Grossman and Mr. Cannici the Social Studies series. Next year the district hopes to purchase textbooks for Kindergarten. Third issue: technology the district leased 49 new computers purchased 2 carts with laptop computers to be used in classrooms. In a perfect world the district would need \$150,000.00 to meet all the technology needs of the district. Mr. Scully asked when the committee meets with the teachers.

Mrs. Lauerma stated after school. She believes there has been a positive outcome from the meetings.

Transportation- Mr. Scully- nothing to report

Building & Grounds- Mr. Allos- reported that Dr. Occhino earlier discussed items related to the energy audit. The committee will make a laundry list with what is needed. He continued by stating that this board has a great balance with letting other members handle their committees. He is pleased to see that the board as a whole seemed to be comfortable with the board committee set up and is confident that the individual committees were making the right decisions on matters regarding their committees.

Community & School Activities- Mr. Scully- recreation committee meeting is tomorrow night.

Legislation- President Bilka explained the 1<sup>st</sup> resolution on the agenda. The Senate has already passed this legislation and is now in the assembly. It seeks to take away power for bargaining. Makes all the actions of the board arbitrations- our contract is advisory not binding. Non-teaching employees could submit a grievance. New Jersey School Boards encouraged districts to vote on this legislation. If passed by the board, it will then be sent to the legislation and they will ultimately decide the outcome. Mrs. Cravello stated assembly can override it. President Bilka agreed, this resolution will be taken by School Boards to lobby against it, legislators have the final say.

Policy- Mr. Allos- nothing to report

Board/Staff Relations- Mrs. Lauerma nothing to report

Negotiating- President Bilka- Negotiating team will be meeting with the RPEA on the 15<sup>th</sup> of this month.

Joint Boards- Mrs. Cravello- High School fashion show tomorrow night. April 18<sup>th</sup> is the PTSA meeting. Tonight April 1 is the HHS PTSA meet the candidate's night, Hackensack still votes for their school board candidates in April. Talent show permission slips are due this week to Hackensack.

Bergen County School Boards- Mrs. Leakas spoke about a recent meeting she attended which focused on School Security- the Bergen County Prosecutors office was in attendance. They showed a video which was very informative; it showed how a split second decision could mean a life or death decision when dealing with an active shooter. The prosecutor feels everyone should see it, personally Mrs. Leakas feels that it may not be suitable for younger children. Mr. Ammerman stated he did see the video. It was shown to area Superintendents. He feels it should be shown to the teachers. It provides a way to expand on what the district is already doing. He again emphasized, that in the Newtown Ct. case nothing could have stopped it. Mrs. Leakas stated at the meeting they

also spoke about having police officers, even hiring retired officers, in the building, armed or unarmed. Mrs. Leakas stated that Mrs. Connie Wagner was at the meeting and she commented that there were great ideas and suggestions made but where does the money to fund these things come from. Mr. Ammerman read in the paper that several area schools have put police officers into the schools, some retired.

Mr. Ammerman stated that the Prosecutors office did offer districts a chance to have their security person come in and make an assessment of the school security. Mr. Ammerman did send in a request. Mrs. Leakas stated they went over things like how visitors enter the building, can school personnel see who is at the door, and are they monitored from door to the office. Only one entrance and exit should be used. In an emergency a parent's first instinct is to go to the school but they should really go to a "safe house" to pick up their children. Mrs. Cravello stated the school has a place for parents to pick up their children. Mr. Ammerman stated you have a place picked out for parents to go but any parent is going to go to the school first. He went on to say that during 9-11 parents were worse than the students. With regard to one entrance or one exit, we can't have every student going out one door, lunch time yes, but not at dismissal- we have practiced this during a fire drill and it doesn't work. Mrs. Cravello stated parents enter and exit one door. Mr. Ammerman stated 90% of the time it's the front door, starting next September there will be a teacher in the hallway. Mrs. Leakas stated that no codes should be used; just say what you have to say during a drill. Mr. Ammerman stated the district already does that.

New Jersey School Boards- Mrs. Leakas – nothing to report

Municipal Alliance – Mr. Allos- has contact information regarding a speaker for anti-bullying. He will share it with Mrs. Hurd and Mr. Ammerman. The information regarding this speaker was received through the township.

President Bilka updated the board on the progress of the 9-11 memorial. The town is looking to increase the concrete pad by the monuments. Extending it out so that there is room for the new memorial. One of the plum trees will have to be moved in order to extend the pad. Now is the best time to move the tree. Mrs. Cravello has drawings and is willing to let the board look at them. Mr. Davidson from the township is willing to come to a meeting and speak to the board.

## **VIII. Items for Board Action - Resolutions**

### **RESOLUTION**

Opposing S-1191 / A-3627

(Undermining a School Board's Ability to Subcontract Services)

WHEREAS, New Jersey's boards of education represent the community's interests in the governance and budget oversight of school districts that collectively serve the health and educational needs of nearly 1.4 million children; and

WHEREAS, school boards continually strive to provide cost-effective ways to deliver services, which will free up additional funds to be used in the classroom or for property-tax relief; and

WHEREAS, many New Jersey school boards have found subcontracting of services such as transportation, cafeteria and maintenance is an option that has saved millions of tax dollars every year; and

WHEREAS, 40 percent of school districts responded to a 2009 survey conducted by the New Jersey School Boards Association, which found the responding districts saved more than \$34 million annually through subcontracting services; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 1191 and Assembly Bill 3627 of the 2012-2013 Legislative Session is a union-backed bill that would place severe obstacles in the way of a school board's ability to subcontract services and save tax dollars; and

WHEREAS, the sole purpose of Senate Bill 1191 and Assembly Bill 3627 is to undermine a board's ability to subcontract services, thereby increasing school employees and increasing the rolls of union membership, which generates more dues for union coffers; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 1191 and Assembly Bill 3627 would remove a school board's option to subcontract services, thereby diverting funds from the classroom and burdening property taxpayers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rochelle Park Board of Education, in its continued effort to provide cost-effective school operations to the community, opposes Senate Bill 1191 and Assembly Bill 3627; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Rochelle Park Board of Education calls on the New Jersey Legislature to reject any such measures that will have the effect of depleting limited resources from our classroom; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to members of the New Jersey legislative district delegation, legislative leadership and to the Governor of the State of New Jersey, and to the New Jersey School Boards Association.

Motion by Mrs. Lauerman, seconded by Mr. Esposito,  
Roll Call 7-0  
Motion carried

#### **BOARD RESOLUTION FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENERGY AUDIT**

**WHERE AS**, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, Office of Clean Energy administers the Local Government Energy Audit Program (Program), an incentive program to assist local government agencies to conduct energy audits and to encourage implementation of energy conservation measures; and,

**WHERE AS**, the Governing Body of Rochelle Park Board of Education has decided to apply to participate in the Local Government Energy Audit Program; and,

**WHERE AS**, the facilities to be audited are in New Jersey, are owned by the Rochelle Park Board of Education, are served by a New Jersey regulated public utility, and that the Rochelle Park Board of Education has not already reserved \$100,000 in the Program this year as of this application; and,

**WHERE AS**, it is acknowledged that acceptance into the Program is dependent on the Scope of Work and cost proposal, and that Program rules will have to be met in order to receive incentive funds; and,

**WHERE AS**, upon acceptance into the Program, the Rochelle Park Board of Education will prepare Facility Data Form and Scopes of Work for Midland School #1 to be audited, solicit quotations from the authorized contractors, and submit the Part B application; and,

**WHERE AS**, the Rochelle Park Board of Education understands that energy audit work cannot proceed until a Application Approval Notice is received from the Program; and,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Governing Body of the Rochelle Park Board of Education approves the submission of an Application for participation in the Local Government Energy Audit Program of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities.

Motion by Mr. Scully, seconded by Mr. Esposito,  
Roll Call 7-0  
Motion carried

**IX. Other Business:**

**X. Open to the Public (Any Item)**

During this portion of the meeting, the residents are invited to address the Board with any questions, comments or concerns that may be in respect to the operation of their school.

Motion by Mrs. Leakas, seconded by Mrs. Lauerman, to open public comment at 8:31 p.m.  
Roll Call 7-0

NONE

Motion by Mr. Allos, seconded by Mr. Esposito, to close public comment at 8:32 p.m.  
Roll Call 7-0

**XI. Announcements:**

**The next Regular Meeting will be held on Monday, April 8, 2013 at 7:30 PM in the Media Center.**

**XII. Executive Session Announcement (if needed)**

WHEREAS, the Rochelle Park Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") will convene in Executive Session to discuss confidential matters which include:

Personnel

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Board shall move into Executive Session to discuss the above referenced matter(s).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the minutes of the executive session will provide as much information as possible without violating any applicable privilege or confidentiality so that the public can understand what was discussed and when available what the Board decision was.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the minutes of the executive session will be released to the public in an appropriately redacted form within a reasonable period of time after the privilege or confidentiality is no longer applicable to such minutes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the redacted portion of the executive session minutes will not be released until such time as the privilege or confidentiality is no longer applicable.

Motion by Mrs. Leakas, seconded by Mrs. Cravello, to open Executive Session at 8:33 p.m.  
Roll Call 7-0

Motion by Mr. Scully, seconded by Mrs. Lauerman, to close Executive Session at 8:56 p.m.  
Roll Call 7-0

Motion by Mr. Allos, seconded by Mrs. Cravello, to resume Caucus Meeting Agenda at 8:56 p.m.  
Roll Call 7-0

### **XIII. Adjournment**

Motion by Mrs. Lauerman, seconded by Mr. Esposito, to adjourn meeting at 8:57 p.m.  
Roll Call 7-0