

## **MINUTES**

### **SPECIAL BOARD MEETING KEANSBURG BOARD OF EDUCATION JOSEPH R. BOLGER MIDDLE SCHOOL GYM APRIL 15, 2025 - 7:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER** Christopher Hoff, President, called the Special Meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT** Brooke Clayton, Kenneth Cook, Judy Ferraro, Patricia Frizell, Christopher Hoff, Kim Kelaher-Moran, Matthew Kitchen, Michael Mankowski and Catherine Ryan

**MEMBERS ABSENT** None

**OTHERS PRESENT** Kathleen O'Hare, Superintendent, Michael Sette, Board Secretary, John O. Bennett, Attorney, Lindsey Case, Business Administrator and District Administration

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - Mr. Hoff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **Committee Reports - Finance Mr. Kenneth Cook**

He addressed the public about the budget shortfall and outlined the district's plan to balance the budget by using surplus funds, reducing specific supply lines, eliminating preschool busing, cutting summer school hours, and allocating funds from the capital reserve.

Ms. O'Hare addressed the public to clarify frequently asked questions and misconceptions regarding the recent funding loss and the district's budgeting process. She explained that the district plans to balance the budget by utilizing surplus funds, reducing supplies, eliminating busing for preschool, and reducing summer school hours. Additionally, funds will be drawn from the capital reserve.

## COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS RELATING TO BOARD AGENDA ITEMS

Christina O. Francis Place inquired about the budget information relating to the percentage of the borough budget allocated to the school district. It was explained to her that the borough budget and the school budget are separate entities. She also raised a concern about taxes potentially increasing by over \$1,000 per household for the year. Ms. O'Hare clarified that this was a worst-case scenario that, fortunately, did not occur.

Tim, (refused to provide his address) inquired about what the additional \$125,000 would mean for taxpayers. Ms. O'Hare responded that it would result in an extra \$3.00 per taxpayer. Tim asked if this amount was a certainty and whether it could increase. Ms. O'Hare clarified that the District could not raise it further, but the Borough could. It was suggested by Mr. Kitchen that he attended a Borough council meeting for more information regarding any potential tax increases.

Tom Brennan, 35 Shadyside: It's good to hear that capital reserves have been built up. It would be best to post those FAQs on the website. We should have seen this coming, given the promises of funding cuts from a certain administration.

## SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY REPORT

The Superintendent of Schools recommends positive action on the following items:

### 1. THE FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TENTATIVE BUDGET APPROVAL

The Superintendent recommends approval to adopt the Tentative Budget for FY 2025-2026:

BE IT RESOLVED that the tentative budget be approved for the 2025-2026 School Year using the 2025-2026 state aid figures and the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary be authorized to submit the following tentative budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline:

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	<u>Debt Service</u>	<u>Total</u>
2025-2026 Total Expenditures	\$42,348,589	\$4,904,203	\$0	\$47,252,792
Less: Anticipated Revenues	\$33,246,789	\$4,904,203	\$0	\$38,150,992
Taxes to be Raised	\$9,101,800	\$0	\$0	\$9,101,800

**APRIL 15, 2025 MINUTES**

And to advertise said tentative budget in the Asbury Park Press in accordance with the form required by the State Department of Education and according to law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a public hearing be held at the Keansburg Board of Education located at 100 Palmer Place, Keansburg, NJ 07734 on April 29, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2025-2026 School Year.

**Maintenance Reserve Withdrawal**

BE IT RESOLVED that as per N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.2(d) the general fund appropriations include a \$700,000 withdrawal from the Maintenance Reserve Account for use on required maintenance activities for a school facility as reported in the comprehensive maintenance plan pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:26-20.5

**Capital Reserve Withdrawal**

BE IT RESOLVED that included in the general fund appropriations, budget line 620 is a withdrawal from Capital Reserve – Other Capital Projects in the amount of \$1,943,863 for other capital project costs of \$1,943,863. The total cost of this project is \$1,943,863 which represents expenditures for construction elements or projects that are in addition to the facilities efficiency standards determined by the Commissioner as necessary to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

**Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement 2025-2026**

WHEREAS, the Keansburg Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3 et seq. requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

WHEREAS, the Keansburg Board of Education established \$50,000.00 as the maximum travel amount for the current school year and has expended \$4,211.84 as of this date; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3, to a maximum expenditure of \$50,000 for the 2025-2026 school year

<b>APPROVAL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY REPORT</b>	
Moved By:	Kenneth Cook
Seconded By:	Matthew Kitchen
Aye:	Brooke Clayton, Kenneth Cook, Judy Ferraro, Patricia Frizell, Christopher Hoff, Kim Kelaher-Moran, Matthew Kitchen, Michael Mankowski and Catherine Ryan
Nay:	
Abstain:	Brook Clayton, On anything related to Shamrock Transportation

## DISCUSSION

Ms. Frizell inquired about the property we own near Bolger, which we currently do not utilize and for which we continue to pay taxes. Can we sell it? Ms. O'Hare mentioned that the district purchased the property for one dollar with the intention of building a school there. However, due to soil testing, the property cannot be developed in its current state. Ms. Case is in discussions with Middletown to arrange a meeting to explore possible uses for this property. More information will follow, but we have a few options under consideration.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS RELATING TO ADDITIONAL

A member of the audience approached with a question regarding the total project cost, mentioning that there is still \$125,000 needed from taxpayers. She inquired about possible ways to raise this amount without increasing taxes. It was explained to her that this is a timing issue; the budget must be balanced, approved by the county, and adopted by the statutory deadline.

**Brooke Clayton:** This is not easy, and thank you for coming out.

**Kenneth Cook:** This came as a surprise within a very short timeframe, and thankfully, the administration worked diligently. Fundraising could be an option in the future. These are difficult decisions, and thank you for being here.

**Kim Kelaher-Moran:** The high school is old and was in need of repairs that were to be funded by this grant. We fought hard to build the Caruso School. Our first priority is the education of our children. We provide them with free meals and numerous opportunities to succeed. If you have questions, please follow the building's chain of command and attend the meetings.

**APRIL 15, 2025 MINUTES**

**Matthew Kitchen:** Thank you for coming. As a homeowner, I do not want to see taxes raised. Could we please send out a phone blast with contact information for political representatives?

**Patricia Frizell:** No comments.

**Catherine Ryan:** No comments.

**Judy Ferraro:** I hope to see everyone at all the meetings. There is a meeting on April 29th.

**Michael Mankowski:** Thank you all for coming. As a board member, it can be frustrating because we have a code of ethics that prevents us from acting independently. If you have any questions, please attend a board meeting or contact the board office. Our budget adoption and presentation will take place on April 29th, so I encourage everyone to come out and attend. Thank you once again for being here.

**Christopher Hoff:** Thank you for being here. I am at a loss for words. We did nothing wrong in this process; the government took the money. Please reach out to your local politicians and let them know that what they have done to our district is unacceptable.

**ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

<b>MOTION TO ADJOURN</b>	
Moved By:	Kenneth Cook
Seconded By:	Judy Ferraro
Aye:	Brooke Clayton, Kenneth Cook, Judy Ferraro, Patricia Frizell, Christopher Hoff, Kim Kelahe-Moran, Matthew Kitchen, Michael Mankowski and Catherine Ryan
Nay:	
Abstain:	

Moved by Kenneth Cook, seconded by Judy Ferraro, and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Sette  
Asst. to the Business  
Administrator/Board Secretary