

WEST MILFORD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
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BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
PRELIMINARY BUDGET HEARING/SPECIAL ACTION MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2021

DISTRICT GOALS - 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

- *To develop a plan to advance communication and consistent methods of communication, and to enhance branding throughout the District.*
- *Continue to revise and implement the District's hybrid learning model and phased re-entry plans with coordinated adherence to student and staff safety, as well as flexible instructional expectations.*
- *Build a District support system for students and staff for the purpose of social-emotional well-being.*
- *Continue to identify, enhance, and monitor fiscal practices that enable the District to maximize efficiency.*

Mrs. Lynda Van Dyk, Board President, called to order the Preliminary Budget Hearing/Special Action Meeting of the Board of Education at 6:30 p.m., on March 9, 2021, in the Westbrook School Media Center. Mrs. Van Dyk asked for a moment of silence, led the flag salute, read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement, and reminded everyone in attendance to silence or turn off their cell phones and note the location of the emergency exits.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT

In accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, a public notice of this meeting has been sent to Board Members, all district schools, the Herald News, the Suburban Trends, the Record, the Messenger, West Milford Town Hall, the County Superintendent's Office, the Board Attorney, Cablevision of Warwick and West Milford TV77; and posted in the Administration Building. Copies of the Board Meeting Calendar Resolution were provided to all local media, Town Hall, Township Library, and all district schools.

MS. BARBARA FRANCISCO, BOARD SECRETARY, CALLED THE ROLL:

TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE	TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE	TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE
Mr. Stillman	Present	Mrs. Dwyer	Present	Mr. Ofshinsky	Present
Mr. Conklin	Present	Mr. Guarino	Present	Mrs. Romeo	Present
Mrs. Stephenson	Present	Mrs. O'Brien	Present	Mrs. Van Dyk	Present

Minutes for the Preliminary Budget Hearing/Special Action Meeting of March 9, 2021

MS. BARBARA FRANCISCO, BOARD SECRETARY, CALLED THE ROLL:

ADMINISTRATION	POSITION	ATTENDANCE
Dr. Alex Anemone	Superintendent of Schools	Present
Ms. Barbara Francisco	Board Secretary/Business Administrator	Present
Mr. Daniel Novak	Director of Education	Absent/Arr. 7:19 p.m.
Dr. Elizabeth McQuaid	Director of Special Services	Absent/Arr. 7:19 p.m.
Andrew Brown, Esq.	Board of Education Attorney	Present

There were approximately 2 members of the public in attendance.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION RESOLUTION

Motion by Mrs. O'Brien, seconded by Mr. Ofshinsky, to approve the following Resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Board immediately go into Executive Session for approximately thirty (30) minutes for the purpose of conducting a grievance hearing.

The executive session minutes will not be released until such time as the privilege or confidentiality is no longer applicable.

VOICE VOTE: All in Favor. MOTION PASSED.

The Board went into Executive Session at 6:32 p.m.

The Board returned to the Public Meeting at 7:19 p.m.

ROLL CALL UPON RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION:

TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE	TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE	TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE
Mrs. Romeo	Present	Mrs. Dwyer	Present	Mr. Conklin	Present
Mr. Ofshinsky	Present	Mr. Stillman	Present	Mrs. O'Brien	Present
Mrs. Stephenson	Present	Mr. Guarino	Present	Mrs. Van Dyk	Present

VII. SPECIAL REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE - Ms. Barbara Francisco, Board Secretary/Business Administrator

Ms. Francisco introduced Mr. Thomas Ferry from the auditing firm of Wielkocz & Company, LLC, to present the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, for the period ending June 30, 2020.

Mr. Ferry spoke about the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and reviewed Exhibit C-1, the budgetary comparison schedule. He explained the restricted fund balance and capital reserve for expenditures for capital items, such as roofs and additions to classrooms. He also spoke about maintenance reserve, statutory surplus, excess surplus that is designated for the subsequent year's budget, and year end encumbrances. He indicated that you can view any CAFR in the State of New Jersey through the Department of Education website.

VII. SPECIAL REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE - Ms. Francisco, Board Secretary/Business Administrator - Continued

Mr. Ferry then discussed the District's debt service and bond payables. He spoke about school bonds of 2016, and explained when they become due. He also spoke about the extension on the audit this year from the State.

Mr. Ferry explained the Auditors Management Report on administrative findings and the scope of the audit. He pointed out the findings in pupil transportation on the DRTRS Report, and the reimbursement for TPAF FICA for an employee that was not eligible. He stated that to have very few comments on an audit with a District this size is very good.

Mrs. Van Dyk thanked Mr. Ferry for his presentation, and thanked Ms. Francisco and her staff.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT - Dr. Alex Anemone

Dr. Anemone provided the Board and the community with a presentation of the 2021-2022 Preliminary Budget. He thanked everyone for their support during the budget process. He spoke about the Board's role and appreciation of their hours of service.

He presented a fiscally conservative budget, with the total budget decreasing by 1.39%, the general fund decreasing by 1.41%, and administrative costs being lower than the regional limit.

Mr. Novak then presented the Board with curriculum highlights including programs, updates and revisions in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Industrial Arts, Music, Art and Family Consumer Science.

Dr. Anemone spoke about the budget timeline, including dates and meetings. He also spoke about the budget being split into two parts, revenues and expenses and how revenues are declining and expenses are rising. He provided the Board with a graph on cumulative state aid reductions and state aid as a percentage of budget. He then spoke about the local tax levy with a cap of 2%. He explained that in West Milford, approximately 80% of our revenues are from our local tax levy, and 2% only increases our revenues by approximately 1.5%. A graph of the local tax levy increases shows a ten year average of 1.54%.

Dr. Anemone showed a comparison between the general fund revenues and expenses from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022, and the tax levy impact. Dr. Anemone spoke about capital projects for 2021-2022, including a new district-wide telephone system, asbestos abatement at Macopin School, paving of the Transportation parking lot, tile replacement at the High School, and carpet tile replacement at Marshall Hill School. He also spoke about proposed cuts, what the future looks like, and the next steps in the budget process with key dates.

Board members had questions and comments regarding the preliminary budget. Mr. Novak, Dr. Anemone, Ms. Francisco, and Dr. McQuaid responded to all of their inquiries and provided them with additional information.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT - AGENDA ITEMS (PLEASE SIGN IN)

This portion of the meeting is open to members of the public for the purpose of addressing resolutions on this agenda only. Members of the public who have requested to speak prior to the meeting will be recognized by the chair first. Each speaker will be given five (5) minutes, for a period of thirty (30) minutes; and then time permitting, other public comment limited to five (5) minutes per speaker will be allowed, until the thirty (30) minute period transpires. All members of the public speaking during this public comment period are asked to address topics listed in the agenda. All speakers are asked to sign the register provided and to give their full name, spell their last name, group affiliation, if appropriate, and provide their address. Issues raised by members of the public may or may not be responded to by the Board. All comments will be considered and a response will be forthcoming if and when appropriate.

The Board asks that members of the public be courteous and respectful of the rights of other individuals when speaking. Specifically, comments regarding students and employees of the Board are discouraged, and the Board and the Administration will not respond to them. Students and employees have specific legal rights afforded to them by the laws of New Jersey. The Board is not responsible and is not liable for any comments made by members of the public. Members of the public should consider their comments in light of the legal rights of those affected or identified in their comments. Members of the public are reminded that they are legally responsible and liable for their comments.

Jessica Sprague, 1 Burma Court, West Milford. She thanked Dr. Anemone for doing everything possible keep our schools open, and feels it has been extremely beneficial to our children. Mrs. Sprague spoke about the 6th and 7th grade students at Macopin School not being able to get the full experience this year. She also spoke about the budget.

Motion by Mrs. O'Brien, seconded by Mr. Ofshinsky, to close Public Comment.

VOICE VOTE: All in Favor. MOTION PASSED.

X. MOTION BY MRS. O'BRIEN, SECONDED BY MR. OFSHINSKY, TO ADOPT THE AGENDA, AS PRESENTED.

VOICE VOTE: All in Favor. MOTION PASSED.

SPECIAL ACTION

XI. EDUCATION - Mrs. Teresa Dwyer, Chairperson

Motion by Mrs. Dwyer, seconded by Mrs. O'Brien, to approve the following agenda items #1 through 2:

DISCUSSION: Mr. Guarino spoke about item #1, and was happy to see another tuition receivable for our District.

Mrs. Van Dyk also commented positively regarding item #1.

SPECIAL ACTION

XI. EDUCATION - Mrs. Dwyer, Chairperson

1. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the following **SPECIAL EDUCATION TUITION RECEIVABLE CONTRACT**, effective March 10, 2021, through June 30, 2021:

<u>District Placement</u>	<u>Tuition</u>	<u>Sending District</u>
Highlander Academy Student#: 73388	\$144.62/diem	Mt. Olive School District Flanders, New Jersey

2. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve **TRAINING AND TRAVEL RELATED EXPENDITURES** for Instructional and School Support Staff at the mileage rate established by the Board. (Documentation provided electronically.)

ROLL CALL FOR ITEMS #1 THROUGH #2:

TRUSTEE	VOTE	TRUSTEE	VOTE	TRUSTEE	VOTE
Mrs. Dwyer	Yes	Mr. Ofshinsky	Yes	Mrs. Romeo	Yes
Mrs. Stephenson	Yes	Mrs. O'Brien	Yes	Mr. Stillman	Yes
Mr. Guarino	Yes	Mr. Conklin	Yes	Mrs. Van Dyk	Yes

The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

SPECIAL ACTION

XII. PERSONNEL/STUDENT AFFAIRS - Mrs. Courtney Stephenson, Chairperson

NOTE: All appointees recommended for employment will meet the New Jersey State law requirements for the criminal history review prior to their start date.

Motion by Mrs. Stephenson, seconded by Mrs. Romeo, to approve the following agenda items #1 through #9:

1. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve an **EXTENSION** to a leave of absence for **CHRISTOPHER KELLY**, Supervisor of Operations, District-wide, without pay under the Family Medical Leave Act, retroactive from March 1, 2021, through March 23, 2021. (Medical)

NOTE: The employee may return prior to the above date pending medical certification.

2. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve a leave of absence for **ALYSSA WILLIS**, Special Education Teacher (Multiple Disabilities), Maple Road School, with pay using sick days, retroactive from February 17, 2021, through April 23, 2021, then without pay under the Family Medical Leave Act, effective April 26, 2021, through May 12, 2021. (Medical)

NOTE: The employee may return prior to the above date pending medical certification.

3. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve a **TRANSFER OF ASSIGNMENT** for **CATHERINE CLINTON**, Special Education Teacher (Resource Center), Apshawa School, to Special Education Teacher (Multiple Disabilities), Maple Road School, retroactive from March 1, 2021, through May 12, 2021. (Replaces Willis) Account: 11-212-100-101-10-10-000

XII. PERSONNEL/STUDENT AFFAIRS - Mrs. Stephenson, Chairperson - Continued

- 4. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve a leave of absence for **LISA LYONS**, Special Education Teacher (Resource Center), Macopin School, without pay under the Family Medical Leave Act, retroactive from March 1, 2021, through April 9, 2021. (Medical/Caregiver)

NOTE: The employee may return prior to the above date.

- 5. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the appointment of **GINA EDMOND**, Replacement Special Education Teacher, (Resource Center), Macopin School (PC#99.08.00.CEB), at the per diem rate of \$150.00, without health benefits, retroactive from March 1, 2021, through April 9, 2021, per Board of Education Agreement. (Replaces Lyons) Account: 11-213-100-101-10-10-000

NOTE: The duration of the position is based on the date of the employee's return to work.

- 6. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve **an amendment to a previously approved resolution (November 2020)**, for a leave of absence for **COLLEEN BEGLEY**, Grade 4 Teacher, Marshall Hill School, with pay using sick days, **retroactive from February 26, 2021, through April 9, 2021, then without pay under the Family Medical Leave Act, effective April 12, 2021, through May 30, 2021.** (Maternity/Child Rearing)

NOTE: The employee may return prior to the above date pending medical certification.

- 7. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve a leave of absence for **DAWN NOWACKI**, Special Class Aide, Maple Road School, without pay under the Family Medical Leave Act, retroactive from March 1, 2021, through March 19, 2021. (Medical/Caregiver)

NOTE: The employee may return prior to the above date.

- 8. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the appointment of **BROOKE AYRES**, Replacement Special Class Aide, Maple Road School (PC#93.03.00.CHD), at the per diem rate of \$84.00, without health benefits, retroactive from March 1, 2021, through March 19, 2021, per Board of Education Agreement. (Replaces Nowacki) Account: 11-215-100-106-10-10-100

- 9. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve a **TEMPORARY TRANSFER OF ASSIGNMENT** for **DAVID GEROLD**, from Special Class Aide, High School, to Replacement Grade 2 Teacher, Apshawa School, at the per diem rate of \$200.00, retroactive from March 3, 2021, through June 24, 2021. (Replaces DeVoid) Account: 11-120-100-101-10-10-103

ROLL CALL FOR ITEMS #1 THROUGH #9:

TRUSTEE	VOTE	TRUSTEE	VOTE	TRUSTEE	VOTE
Mrs. Stephenson	Yes	Mr. Conklin	Yes	Mr. Stillman	Yes
Mrs. Romeo	Yes	Mr. Ofshinsky	Yes	Mrs. Dwyer	Yes
Mrs. O'Brien	Yes	Mr. Guarino	Yes	Mrs. Van Dyk	Yes

The **MOTION PASSED.**

XIII. OPERATIONS & FINANCE - Mr. David Ofshinsky, Chairperson

Motion by Mr. Ofshinsky, seconded by Mr. Conklin, to approve the following agenda item #1:

1. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 18A:24-54 permits a Board of Education to transfer the proceeds of a capital project when the project is completed, and such funds are no longer necessary for the original purpose or any other authorized purpose; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned statute authorizes the Board of Education to determine whether to apply such funds to either the general fund or the debt service fund of the district; and

WHEREAS, the West Milford Board of Education has determined that \$204,003 is available for such transfer;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the West Milford Board of Education that it hereby authorizes the district's School Business Administrator to transfer \$100,000 of this available balance to the debt service fund consistent with all applicable laws and regulations.

ROLL CALL FOR ITEM #1:

TRUSTEE	VOTE	TRUSTEE	VOTE	TRUSTEE	VOTE
Mr. Ofshinsky	Yes	Mrs. Romeo	Yes	Mr. Conklin	Yes
Mr. Guarino	Yes	Mrs. O'Brien	Yes	Mr. Stillman	Yes
Mrs. Stephenson	Yes	Mrs. Dwyer	Yes	Mrs. Van Dyk	Yes

The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Motion by Mr. Ofshinsky, seconded by Mr. Stillman, to approve the following agenda item #2:

DISCUSSION: Mr. Conklin had questions on the budget and a second turf field. Ms. Francisco explained that an engineering study needs be done to determine whether or not a second turf field can be installed. Ms. Francisco indicated she will discuss this further at the Operations & Finance Committee Meeting.

2. The recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, by the West Milford Township Board of Education, County of Passaic, that the **2021-2022 DISTRICT PRELIMINARY BUDGET** be approved as follows:

General Fund	\$72,568,959
Special Revenue	\$ 1,174,663
Debt Service	\$ 597,500
TOTAL BUDGET	\$74,341,122

XIII. OPERATIONS & FINANCE - Mr. Ofshinsky, Chairperson - Continued

2. (Continued)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the following **GENERAL FUND AND DEBT SERVICE TAX LEVIES** be approved to support the 2021-2022 Preliminary Budget:

General Fund	\$58,666,165
Debt Service	\$ 294,349
TOTAL	\$58,960,514

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that included in budget line 620, Budgeted Withdrawal from Capital Reserve for Other Capital Projects is \$418,420, to be used towards asbestos floor abatement and replacement, and infrastructure upgrades to support a new telephone system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that included in budget line 630, Budgeted Withdrawal from Maintenance Reserve for Budgeted Required Maintenance is \$150,000.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12, in each pre-budget year, the West Milford Board of Education is required to establish a maximum travel expenditure amount for the budget year which may not be exceeded.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education has determined that the maximum travel expenditure amount includes all travel that is supported by Federal, State and local funds.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education had previously established a maximum amount for the pre-budget year 2020-2021 as \$179,698.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education has expended \$11,762 of the maximum amount for the pre-budget year to date.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the West Milford Board of Education hereby establish the maximum travel expenditure amount for the 2021-2022 school year as \$163,520.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Board of Education approved "tentative" budget is being presented for advertising prior to Executive County Superintendent approval. The budget will be approved by the Executive County Superintendent prior to the public hearing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the budget is in conformity with regulations promulgated by the Department of Education and the Board of Education has submitted supporting documents to the state for maximum professional services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board authorizes the Business Administrator to make any adjustments to the budget submission to bring it in conformity with state regulations. Adjustments will be reviewed and approved by the Board at the Public Budget Hearing.

XIII. OPERATIONS & FINANCE - Mr. Ofshinsky, Chairperson - Continued

2. (Continued)

ROLL CALL FOR ITEM #2:

TRUSTEE	VOTE	TRUSTEE	VOTE	TRUSTEE	VOTE
Mr. Ofshinsky	Yes	Mr. Guarino	Yes	Mrs. Dwyer	Yes
Mrs. Stephenson	Yes	Mrs. O'Brien	Yes	Mr. Conklin	Yes
Mrs. Romeo	Yes	Mr. Stillman	Yes	Mrs. Van Dyk	Yes

The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT - AGENDA OR NON-AGENDA ITEMS (PLEASE SIGN IN)

This portion of the meeting is open to members of the public having a legitimate interest in the actions of the Board for the purpose of addressing any subject matter pertinent to and/or directly related to the operation of the West Milford Public School District. Members of the public who have requested to speak prior to the meeting will be recognized by the chair first. Each speaker will be given five (5) minutes, for a period of thirty (30) minutes; and then time permitting, other public comment limited to five (5) minutes per speaker will be allowed, until the thirty (30) minute period transpires. All speakers are asked to sign the register provided and give their full name, spell their last name, group affiliation, if appropriate, and provide their address. Issues raised by members of the public may or may not be responded to by the Board. All comments will be considered and a response will be forthcoming if and when appropriate.

The Board asks that members of the public be courteous and respectful of the rights of other individuals when speaking. Specifically, comments regarding students and employees of the Board are discouraged, and the Board and the Administration will not respond to them. Students and employees have specific legal rights afforded to them by the laws of New Jersey. The Board is not responsible and is not liable for any comments made by members of the public. Members of the public should consider their comments in light of the legal rights of those affected or identified in their comments. Members of the public are reminded that they are legally responsible and liable for their comments.

Motion by Mr. Ofshinsky, seconded by Mr. Guarino, to close Public Comment.

VOICE VOTE:

All in Favor.

MOTION PASSED.

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:40 p.m., Mrs. Romeo made a motion, seconded by Mrs. O'Brien, to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing current litigation matters and matters of attorney/client privilege. No action will be taken.

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION - Continued

The executive session minutes will not be released until such time as the privilege or confidentiality is no longer applicable.

VOICE VOTE: All in Favor. MOTION PASSED.

The Board returned to the Public Meeting at 9:09 p.m.

ROLL CALL UPON RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION:

TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE	TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE	TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE
Mrs. Romeo	Present	Mrs. Dwyer	Present	Mr. Ofshinsky	Present
Mrs. Stephenson	Present	Mrs. O'Brien	Present	Mr. Conklin	Present
Mr. Stillman	Present	Mr. Guarino	Present	Mrs. Van Dyk	Present

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Guarino, seconded by Mr. Conklin, to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

VOICE VOTE: All in Favor. MOTION PASSED

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Francisco
Board Secretary