

Minutes of the Regular Meeting

April 30, 2024

MOUNTAINSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT

BEECHWOOD SCHOOL - 1497 WOODACRES DRIVE, MOUNTAINSIDE, NJ 07092

DEERFIELD SCHOOL - 302 CENTRAL AVENUE, MOUNTAINSIDE, NJ 07092

For agenda attachments available to the public, please contact the Mountainside Board of Education Office at (908) 232-3232 or peruse same at the respective meeting.

Also, Mountainside Board of Education policies may be accessed via the district website.

I. Call to Order

A Regular Meeting of the Mountainside Board of Education of the Borough of Mountainside in the County of Union, New Jersey was called to order by Mrs. Pupo, at 6:03 p.m.

II. Roll Call

At roll call, the following members were present:

- Mr. Bill Dillon
- Mr. Michael Goodwin
- Dr. Dana Guidiciopietro
- Mr. Jordan Hyman
- Mrs. Vivian Pupo
- Mrs. Candice Schiano
- Mr. Carmine Venes

Also present were Janet Walling, Superintendent of Schools, and Dana Sullivan, Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary.

III. Executive Session - Resolution (Attachment #1)

Moved: <u>Dr. Guidiciopietro</u>	Seconded: <u>Mr. Goodwin</u>
RC: Dillon -yes	Goodwin - yes Guidiciopietro - yes Hyman - yes
Pupo - yes	Schiano - yes Venes -yes

WHEREAS, Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 (R.S. 10:4-13), permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting or portion of a meeting of this public body in circumstances; and **WHEREAS**, the Board must consider matter(s) involving the following:

- Legal/personnel matters

The disclosure of which could constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy; now

WHEREAS, the discussion of individual items to be considered by the Board in closed session may be made public once the need for confidentiality no longer exists, but the Board cannot state at the present time then that will be.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board adjourn to executive session at 6:10 p.m. to discuss the above mentioned matter to the exclusion of all others. Matters discussed may or may

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not be made public this evening. If an action results, it will be taken following reentry into regular session.

IV. Close Executive Session and Reconvene Public Session

Moved: Mr. Goodwin Seconded: Dr. Guidicipietro
RC: Dillon -yes Goodwin - yes Guidicipietro - yes Hyman - yes
 Pupo - yes Schiano - yes Venes -yes

The public meeting reconvened at 7:37 p.m.

V. Flag Salute

VI. 7:30 p.m. Public Hearing on the Final 2024-2025 Budget - Mrs. Sullivan presented the final budget. The board asked some questions about waivers to the 2% cap and how that works with the state. State-wide budget gap issues are pushing districts to an April election to align with separate proposals and budget planning. Mrs. Walling noted that the district was very strategic and thoughtful about what cuts need to be made, and what areas would be part of the second proposal. She noted that the focus is on programs that best support education for students. The public has been made aware of budget issues through Strategic Planning meetings, and the District will continue to communicate where things stand into the fall prior to the vote.

VII. Public Comments on the Budget - A member of the community asked questions about staff cuts and transportation costs. Mrs. Walling and Mrs. Sullivan responded. She asked about how state aid is determined, and Mrs. Sullivan responded. She asked about future planning to combat these budgetary issues. Mrs. Walling responded to how ARP funding was utilized, and what programs we'd ideally like to continue. Mrs. Sullivan commented on how the 2% cap is affecting all districts in some way, now or in upcoming years. Mrs. Walling noted it's our goal to minimize the impact on students, to maintain class size, and she hopes to reinstate as much as possible if the second question passes in November.

VIII. Approval of Minutes

Moved: Dr. Guidicipietro Seconded: Mr. Hyman
RC: Dillon -yes Goodwin - yes Guidicipietro -yes Hyman - yes
 Pupo - yes Schiano -abstain 3/19-yes 4/8 Venes -absent

- ❖ Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 19, 2024
- ❖ Minutes of the Executive Session of March 19, 2024
- ❖ Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 8, 2024

IX. Correspondence - none

X. Public Participation - none

XI. President's Report - Mrs. Pupo thanked community members for coming out for the first two Strategic Planning meetings. She wished students good luck with NJSLA testing.

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XII. Superintendent’s Report - Mrs. Walling noted NJSLA testing is in full swing, she thanked staff, especially Mrs. Goldbeck for the planning and organization for it as our district coordinator and Mrs. Crisafulli as our school coordinator. Strategic Planning meeting outcomes are posted on our website for reference. She was pleased that a lot of the conversations were about how to expand our educational opportunities, as opposed to how to create opportunities. She noted class trips have been happening recently in several grades. The district is celebrating staff appreciation, and administrators provided an ice cream truck as a treat for all. She recommended to the board that summer hours be fixed to Mon-Thur and closing district offices on Fridays.

XIII. Business Administrator's Report - none

XIV. Berkeley Heights Liaison Report - Mr. Hyman reported from the last 4 meetings. On 4/10, the board interviewed 3 more superintendent search firms. On 4/15, at a Special meeting they discussed interactive Zoom board meetings; approved RFP for a new law firm; interviewed interim superintendent candidates. On 4/18, at the regular meeting they noted the start of final marking period, NJSLA testing, AP exams; noted the Daffodil Art project, Spring sports updates, recognized winter sports winners; Committee met about field usage, field lights, press box, and girls locker room needed improvements. Rob Nixon was extended as acting superintendent through May 27th. Snow give back days were decided, further discussion about piloting a program for interactive Zoom board meetings. They selected NJ School Boards as the superintendent search firm. On 4/24, there was public feedback on the budget. The next meeting will be on 6/10. Mr. Dillon asked about considering a partnership with Berkeley Heights if there is interest for boys middle school volleyball in the future.

XV. Administration

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Administration #1-4**

Moved: Mrs. Schiano

Seconded: Mr. Venes

RC: Dillon -yes

Goodwin - yes

Guidici Pietro - yes

Hyman - yes

Pupo - yes

Schiano - yes

Venes -yes

1. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board affirms the determination made by the Superintendent regarding the HIB Investigation(s) reported by the Superintendent at the Board’s March 19, 2024 Meeting, which encompasses all HIB findings from February 1, 2024 through March 19, 2024.
2. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the revised school calendar with emergency give back day adjustments as follows: (Attachment #2)

School closed 5/24 and 6/20. 6/18 is now a half day, and 6/19 is the last day of school.
3. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Beechwood and Deerfield Schools March 2024 safety and security drill reports. (Attachment #3)
4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Beechwood and Deerfield Schools Bus Evacuation Drill reports. (Attachment #4)

XVI. Budget and Finance

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Mr. Dillon commented that the Budget & Finance Committee met and agreed to the increased bus fee.

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Budget and Finance #1-18**

Moved: Mr. Goodwin

Seconded: Mr. Venes

RC: Dillon -yes

Goodwin - yes

Guidici Pietro - yes Hyman - yes

Pupo - yes

Schiano - yes

Venes -yes

1. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approve the list of budget transfers for the month of March 2024. (Attachment #5)
2. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approve the payment of the bill list dated March 21, 2024, through April 30, 2024. (Attachment #6)
3. **WHEREAS**, the Board has received the Financial Reports of the Treasurer of School Monies for the month of March 2024 and the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary for the month of March 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Interim Board Secretary, Dana Sullivan, certifies that subject to the approval of budget transfers appended to these minutes, payment of the claims set forth in the accompanying bill list will not result in the over expenditure of any budget line item appropriation, as modified to date set forth in the level of detail contained in the Reports of the Board Secretary for March 2024:

RESOLVED THAT, the Board accepts the Treasurer Report for the month of March 2024 and the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary for March 2024 as submitted and certified. (Attachment #7)

4. **WHEREAS**, the Mountainside Board of Education adopted a tentative budget on March 19, 2024 to be submitted to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval, and

WHEREAS, the tentative budget was approved by the Executive County Superintendent of Schools on April 4, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the tentative budget was advertised in the legal section of the Westfield Leader on April 25, 2024;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mountainside Board of Education hereby adopts the 2024-2025 School Year budget and,

BE IT RESOLVED that there should be raised for the General Funds tax levy \$18,412,094 for the ensuing School Year 2024-2025 and,

BE IT RESOLVED that there should be raised for Debt Service tax levy, \$849,069, for the ensuing School Year 2024-2025 as follows:

	GENERAL FUND	SPECIAL REVENUES	DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL

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2024-25 Total Expenditures	\$21,109,145	\$158,118	\$1,287,690	\$22,554,953
Less: Anticipated Revenues	\$2,697,051	\$158,188	\$438,621	\$3,293,790
Taxes to Be Raised	\$18,412,094	\$0	\$849,069	\$19,261,163

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the final budget the adjustment for increased costs of health benefits in the amount of \$58,935. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health benefit premiums.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the final budget an appropriation of surplus in the amount of \$394,655.

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 \$85,000 to be used to replace network switches and wireless access points.

BE IT RESOLVED that the general fund appropriations include a \$86,123 withdrawal from the Tuition Reserve Account which were deposited into the account in SY 2022-2023 and are now required to be withdrawn to pay tuition obligations in SY 2024-2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves a separate proposal in the amount of \$396,000 which will result in a permanent increase in the tax levy as follows:

3 Teachers and Benefits	\$289,000
1 Part Time Curriculum Coordinator	\$ 60,000
Contracted Mental Health Support	\$ 30,000
After School Academic Support	\$ 17,000

These expenditures are in addition to those required to achieve NJSLS.

Travel and Related Expenses Reimbursement:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that included in this budget, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3, the maximum travel expenditure for the 2024-2025 school year amount shall be set at \$26,000. The maximum travel expenditure for the 2023-2024 school year is \$26,000, of which \$7,078 has been spent and \$322 is encumbered as of March 6, 2024.

WHEREAS, The 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, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 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;

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AND, a board of education may establish, for regular district business travel only, an annual school year threshold of \$150 per staff member or district board of education member where prior Board approval shall not be required unless this annual threshold for a staff member is exceeded in a given school year (July 1 through June 30);

AND, travel and related expenses not in compliance with N.J.A.C.6A:23A Subchapter 7 but deemed by the board of education to be necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out-of-District Travel and Reimbursement Forms;

NOW BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves all travel not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 as being necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out-of-District Travel and Reimbursement Forms.

5. **WHEREAS**, the Mountainside Board of Education applies for annual funding through the Schools and Libraries Program of the Universal Service Fund, more commonly known as the "E-Rate" Program, which provides discounts to eligible entities for Internet Access services.

WHEREAS, the districts E-Rate Consultants, E2E Exchange solicited bids through a posted FCC Form 470 number 240009626 in accordance with E-Rate Program rules to initiate the competitive bidding process to solicit bids from vendors to replace network switches and wireless access points.

WHEREAS, the Technology Department reviewed the bids submitted to the district and hereby recommend that the Board approve the award of contract to Custom Computer Specialists for a total cost of \$84,714.32

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mountainside School District approves the award of contract to Custom Computer Specialists to replace the network switches and wireless access points for a total contract price of \$84,714.32.

6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the acceptance of a grant for "Additional or Compensatory Special Education and Related Services (ACSERS) for Students with Disabilities who are 21 as of July 1, 2023" in the amount of \$212,964 for the 23-24 school year.
7. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Architect of Record agreement with Solutions Architecture for the 2024-2025 school year. (Attachment #8)
8. Move to approve an agreement for participation in Coordinated Transportation Services between Union County Educational Services Commission and the Mountainside Board of Education for Transportation for the 2024-2025 school year. (Attachment #9)
9. Move to approve an agreement for participation in Coordinated Transportation Services between Morris-Union Jointure Commission and the Mountainside Board of Education for Transportation for the 2024-2025 school year.
10. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Student Transportation Contract Renewal with Durham School Service for the 2024-2025 school year, at the CPI increase rate of 5.81% for all 5 routes. (Attachment #10)

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11. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Mountainside Board of Education set the annual fee for Subscription Busing for SY 2024-2025 at \$725.
12. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, Dr. Ronald M. Frank, MD FAAFP, to provide School Physician Services, in the amount \$2,350, for the 2024-2025 school year. (Attachment #11)
13. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, a 12-month agreement with BrightStar Care for nursing services, at a rate of \$95/hour, effective May 1, 2024.
14. **BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Mountainside Board of Education approve the amendment of the settlement agreement with respect to student #6526072804, a copy of which is on file with the Superintendent of Schools.
15. Motion to approve upon recommendation of the superintendent, continued participation in various state and national cooperative contracts as a method of procurement in accordance with Chapter 139 PL 2011 as referenced in Local Finance Notice 2012-12, May 14, 2012 for the 2024-2025 school year to include:
 - Educational Data Services, Inc with a licensing and maintenance fee of \$1,835 (Attachment #12)
16. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to contract with R&L DataCenters, Inc., for payroll and related services from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. (Attachment # 13)
17. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the proposal from JAG Consulting, LLC. for information technology services in the 2024-2025 school year at a rate of \$35 an hour. (Attachment #14)
18. Move to approve in accordance with MBOE policy 6471, School District Travel, and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the travel and related expenses itemized in (Attachment #15). This travel is deemed educationally necessary and fiscally prudent, and all travel expenditures shall be directly related to and within the scope of the staff member's current responsibilities and the district's Professional Development Plan.

XVII. Personnel

Mr. Hyman asked about doing something special for Mr. McGowan, Mrs. Walling agreed that he will be honored at an upcoming meeting.

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Personnel #1-15**

Moved: Mr. Hyman Seconded: Mr. Venes

RC: Dillon -yes Goodwin -yes Guidici Pietro - yes Hyman - yes
 Pupo - yes Schiano - yes Venes -yes

1. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept the retirement of **Thomas McGowan**, Beechwood Custodian, effective July 1, 2024, and thank him for his incredible 27 years of service to the Mountainside School District. (Attachment #16)

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2. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following requests to extend leaves of absence (Attachment #17):

Name	Position	LOA w/ pay & benefits	LOA unpaid with benefits (if applicable)	Extended LOA w/o pay or benefits	Return Date
N. Wong	PE/Health Teacher	n/a	n/a	May 6-17 2024	5/20/24

3. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to extend the appointment of **Kirsten Post**, as PE Leave Replacement effective May 6, 2024 through June 19, 2024.
4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, a medical leave of absence for **Employee #90247511**, beginning May 14, 2024 through June 19, 2024.
5. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, a medical leave of absence for **Employee #90163080**, beginning April 22, 2024 through May 15, 2024. **end date revised*
6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following adjustments for paraprofessionals as follows beginning the week of April 15, 2024:

Staff Member	Additional work day:	Rate:
Lydra Shehu	Thursdays	\$27.22/hour
Teri Schrul	Fridays	\$28.30/hour

7. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the addition of the following to the 2023-2024 Substitute Teacher List:

Name	Certification	Rate
Grace Elliott (LTS)	Teacher Cert.	\$125/day

8. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following temporary custodial workers for summer employment as outlined below, upon successful criminal background check and paperwork. (Attachment #18)

Name	Days	Rate	Approx. Total
Cole Williams	8 Weeks (July-Aug)	\$16.85/hr.	\$5,000
Ayden Negron	8 Weeks (July-Aug)	\$16.85/hr.	\$5,000

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9. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following staffing for the 2024-2025 Summer Learning Academy from July 8, 2024 through August 1, 2024, Mondays through Thursdays, at rate of \$44.00/hour, not to exceed 4 hours per day. Program is supported through ARP Federal Grant Funding:

Holly Ambrose	Teresa Banks	Michelle Jamnik	Lori Topel
Michelle Cruz	Kelly Herscheit	Nicole Tyburski	Stephanie Mlynarczyk

10. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, **Lori Topel** as the Summer Learning Academy Coordinator, at a rate of \$44 per hour, not to exceed 15 hours. Cost will be supported through ARP Federal Grant funding.
11. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the notification to take class and a request for tuition reimbursement for **Paige Primmer**, Special Education Teacher, for classes taken at Fairleigh Dickinson University for 2024 WIFFT Sessions for Orton Gillingham certification hours, in the amount of \$270.00. (Attachment #19)
12. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following staff for 2023-2024 School Year Stipend Positions, contingent upon student enrollment for those student activities subsidized in accordance with Board Policy 2436, Activity Participation Fee Program.

Staff Members	Position	Rate
Bryan Young	8th Grade Trip Chaperone	\$278 (3+ yr rate)
Axl Hirsch	8th Grade Trip Chaperone	\$278 (3+ yr rate)
Sarah Onore	8th Grade Trip Chaperone	\$278 (3+ yr rate)
Dan Kessler	8th Grade Trip Chaperone	\$278 (3+ yr rate)
Madison Phillips	8th Grade Trip Chaperone	\$265 (1-2 yr. rate)
Nina Woo	8th Grade Trip Chaperone	\$278 (3+ yr rate)
Jessica Goldstein	8th Grade Trip Chaperone	\$278 (3+ yr rate)
Caitlin Styles	8th Grade Trip Chaperone	\$278 (3+ yr rate)
Sonia Branco	8th Grade Trip Chaperone	\$278 (3+ yr rate)
Suzanne Jenks	8th Grade Trip Administrator	n/a

* *and to rescind Vincent Stasio as chaperone previously approved on 8/8/23*

13. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Child Study Team Staffing for meetings, evaluations, and case management effective June 20, 2024 to August 31, 2024.

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Name	Assignment	Rate	Not to Exceed
Amanda Somers-Guerrasio	School Psychologist (for meetings/evaluations)	\$44.00/hour	NTE 50 hours
Eileen D'Antonio	School Social Worker (for meetings/evaluations)	\$44.00/hour	NTE 50 hours

14. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following staffing of the 2024-2025 ESY Program from July 1, 2024 through August 1, 2024, from 9:00-12:30, as detailed below:

2024- 2025 ESY July 1st – August 1st, 2024

Dates as follows:

- Week 1: July 1-3 (Mon-Wed. No school July 4th)
- Week 2: July 8-12 (Mon - Fri)
- Week 3: July 15-18 (Mon-Thur)
- Week 4: July 22-25 (Mon-Thur)
- Week 5: July 29-Aug 1 (Mon-Thur)

Salary based on MEA staff contract
ESY Special Education Teachers

Name	Position	Salary/Hour
Stephanie Cuccio	Special Education Teacher	\$44.00/hour
Lauren Kushner	Special Education Teacher	\$44.00/hour
Leila Morrelli	Speech-Language Therapist	\$44.00/hour

15. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the resignation of **Marilyn Nacci**, Paraprofessional, effective May 30, 2024, and thank her for her dedication to the Mountainside School District. (Attachment #20)

XVIII. Curriculum

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Curriculum #1**

Moved: Mr. Goodwin

Seconded: Dr. Guidicipietro

RC: Dillon -yes

Goodwin -yes

Guidicipietro - yes

Hyman - yes

Pupo - yes

Schiano - yes

Venes -yes

1. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, field trips as detailed to the Board of Education.

XIX. Policy

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Policy #1-2**

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Moved: Dr. Guidici Pietro Seconded: Mrs. Schiano
 RC: Dillon -yes Goodwin - yes Guidici Pietro - yes Hyman - yes
 Pupo - yes Schiano - yes Venes -yes

1. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following policies/regulations for the first reading:

P 2411	Guidance Counseling	Revised/Mandated
P 2423	Bilingual Education	Revised/Mandated
P 2431.4 R 2431.4	Prevention and Treatment of Sports-Related Concussions and Head Injuries	Revised/Mandated

2. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following policies/regulations for the second reading and adoption:

P 1140	Educational Equity Policies/Affirmative Action	Revised/Mandated
P 1523	Comprehensive Equity Plan	Revised/Mandated
P 1530	Equal Employment Opportunities	Revised/Mandated
P 1550	Equal Employment/Anti-Discrimination Practices	Revised/Mandated
P 2260	Equity in School and Classroom Practices	Revised/Mandated
P 5750	Equitable Educational Opportunities	Revised/Mandated

XX. Old Business - none

XXI. New Business - none

XXII. Committee Reports - Mr. Hyman noted that he's been pleased with the Strategic Planning meetings, attendance, and participation. Mr. Dillon agreed that the various community stakeholders in attendance have been encouraging. Mr. Dillon commented that the Budget and Finance committee met and discussed the budget, bus fees, and coordination with MSBL. MSBL wants to go cashless at the snack shack, and pilot a plan to improve wifi there. Other board members commented that cash for younger kids is preferred.

XXIII. Public Participation - the Berkeley Heights Board President introduced herself and looks forward to enhanced communications between our districts in the future through a newly established committee.

XXIV. Executive Session and Adjournment - Resolution (Attachment #1)

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A motion was made by Dr. Guidici Pietro at 8:55 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Schiano to move to a 2nd Executive Session and adjourn the public portion. No further action will be taken. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote, 7 ayes - 0 nays.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dana Sullivan
Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary