



***Barnegat Township  
School District***

**BARNEGAT BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**Initial Budget Workshop for 2011-2012 SY**

**January 4, 2011  
Tuesday, 6:30 PM**

Barnegat High School  
180 Bengal Blvd.  
Barnegat, NJ 08005

*Our collective mission is to nurture and educate our children in accordance with all curriculum standards to prepare them for responsible citizenship and success in life.*

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Houser: I would like to call this Special Meeting on January 4, 2010 to order.

### **II. OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT**

The notice of this meeting has been forwarded to the Asbury Park Press, and placed in the foyer of the Barnegat High School, and the at Municipal Building and filed with the Municipal Clerk, in conjunction with the Open Public Meeting Act N.J.S.A.10:4-10.

### **III. ROLL CALL**

Mr. Adorno	Present
Mr. Cloke	Present
Mr. Mihalik	Present
Mrs. Pilovsky	Present
Mr. Quiroz	Present
Mr. Houser	Present

Mrs. Becker	Absent
Mrs. Sarno	Absent (Arrived at 7:16 p.m.)
Mrs. Taylor	Absent

Also Present: Mr. Jason Bing, Superintendent  
Mr. Dean Allison, Business Administrator/Board Secretary  
Mr. Ben Montenegro, Board Attorney

Mr. Houser: Mrs. Sarno will be here late, she said about 15 mins. late.

### **IV. FLAG SALUTE**

Mr. Houser: Would everyone please rise to salute the Flag.

All: Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Houser: I added one motion to the Agenda that is a motion to approve the Agenda and/or Additions, and I also added that we will have a Board member open session if anyone wants to talk after the public has talked about the budget. This way we can have an open forum. May I have a motion to approve the Agenda and/or Additions?

Mrs. Pilovsky: So moved

Mr. Mihalik: Second

Mr. Houser: All those in favor signify by saying Aye.

All: Aye

Mr. Houser: Opposed? Motion carried.

#### **V. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS**

Mr. Houser: The only thing I wanted to say is that Mrs. Becker took a fall today and unfortunately was unable to make it tonight. She said she should be ok, but she does have to go to the doctor's tomorrow.

The reason we called the Special Meeting tonight, the main purpose is to give the public an opportunity to make any suggestions and give us any recommendation and have input on the budget and also for the Board members we will be having workshops moving forward. We do have a budget committee comprised of four Board members. Those Board members are Mrs. Pilovsky, Mrs. Becker, Mr. Quiroz and Mr. Houser. That is the budget committee. With that I will open the meeting up to Public Session.

#### **VI. PUBLIC SESSION**

In accordance with Board of Education Policy, each participant must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface their comments by an announcement of their name, address and group affiliation, if appropriate. Do we have a motion to open the meeting to public comments?

Mrs. Pilovsky: So moved.

Mr. Mihalik: Second

Mr. Houser: All those in favor signify by saying Aye.

All: Aye

Mr. Houser: Opposed? Motion carried. Would anyone like to speak? Just give your name and address.

Frank Pecci, 11 Hemlock Drive, Barnegat, NJ – I was unsure when I got a call the other day about the budget and what this was going to be about. I thought it was basically like a committee with four members, but obviously it is not going to be held that way. Let me give you some of my ideas. Doing school board budgets for fifteen years and college board budgets for ten years, the last one was \$100M budget, I was telling your Board President, Lisa, a couple of weeks ago when she questioned me about what I thought about budgets and what I would do because she hears me at the municipal body blasting them and what they do. The budgets, to me, today, what I see happening is even when you talk zero base you are talking a base that you already have and

say we have a fixed cost, we have those teachers' salaries, that is not all true. There are a lot of things provided in those teachers' salaries. There is attrition and people are leaving and retiring; there are other people leaving the system. You have longevity built in and raises built in so you have to start at zero base and where they are on the guide. If somebody is moving from one step to another step that is an increment and they are going to get it; how many people get stipends so that will tell you something. That will be the same with any other salary personnel. I read in the paper you are thinking about solar; there are certain things that you can do about that part of the budget right now. Knowing what your utilities anticipate the cost that you will incur this year but more importantly what you can do to offset that. There are companies that come in and retrofit whatever you are looking at whether it be electric or whatever and they would give you a flat rate and they would do it free. What they save you in energy that is how they are paid.

There are things to look at like that and things that other utilities, as I was just telling the Board Secretary, that years ago in Clifton and I am not sure if it still happens here; PSE&G we had twenty schools and what I did was to change over the heating system. We had gas like you did here but when it went down we had to close the schools. So what we did we put in dual burners. We did one school a year; there was no way we could have done 21 schools, but we did one or two a year depending on the budget. What the utility gave us was \$1,000 a year for each of those units. They are collecting \$21,000 now. The other thing is rentals; nobody wanted to rent the stadium. There are a lot of things you can look at to bring money in.

There are other contracts you have in here. I am sure that there is a telephone contract, computer contracts and contracts with your attorney. There are numerous contracts in here that have to be reviewed rather than, well, it was that way last year and it has to be the same this year. Another thing is in your health. You will find in your health program, even if you have the state program, I am familiar with health because we just did it in the interstate. In order to save people we had to do something and they had to pay 20% of the cost. That is a contractual thing. There are other things that happen when you have a person or personnel that get injured, "x" amount of money by that insurance company is allocated. Say, open-heart surgery, \$75,000, they allocate that because they know that basically that is the cost. But then, what happens is somebody that is big and strong like my friend, Jimmy, recovers very fast and his therapy is quick and all of a sudden there is this "x" amount of \$5,000 which is left over but it goes into the next year. They don't tell you about it, that is not their business to tell you about it; they should but they don't. So when they say the cost is going to rise "x" amount of dollars it does because nobody looked at what this reserve was. So someone in here has to be responsible for looking at reserves in your insurance or other reserves you may have. Someone has to do a little better in checking on your financial situation. I guess that will clear up; I saw it on the agenda that night, with the township getting the money to you on time. All of your investments need to be looked at; maybe you have to lump them together. You are not getting that much interest; sometimes by lumping them together you get a better deal.

Your bus fleet is another thing you cut back and you got the sidewalks and more kids can walk. I don't know what that means in dollars; I am sure you do know or should know what that will mean in dollars saved. The other thing is your contractual obligations. I do not know when they come up but you have to start looking realistically; I don't care if you like it or not, flat dollars. Nobody gets hurt with flat dollars; in fact it works out better. That is what you will have to start

looking at. Other than that I will wait for Jimmy because he drove me here, I don't have a car. Thank you for your time.

Mr. Houser: I just want to say one thing; we will have more meetings. This will not be the only public meeting besides the budget committee for the Board. We will have other meetings and have them all over town, at the Library and the adult communities like we have in the past. We will also be having a meeting before we do the budget again to talk about it. We have to find out what the Governor is doing with regard to our state aid goes. We will be hearing all kinds of rumors like we are hearing now and after we find out exactly what it is we will have a better handle on it.

Mr. Pecci: That is why zero based is pretty good because even anticipating the worst scenario of what he could do. One other thing I forgot which I think is very important, I know it is very important to me and everyone. Everything we did on the budget line we had a back up page so that it was easily read and understood by the public. When you have back-up pages and explain exactly what represented that line item you will not have a problem because you have the people saying that you are spending money like drunken sailors. The other thing is on books, we did that on books too with new programs; we had to buy new books with the new math and even the teachers had a problem with it. So all of a sudden we buy from grade 1-8 and guess what, two years they went in the garbage. So, what we did when new programs came in like from Rutgers, that new reading program that came in a couple of years ago, it was really good. We bought grade 1 and 3 to see how that worked out; the following year we bought grade 2 and the following grade 4. If it didn't work out we would get rid of them, but we did not because it was a really good program. That is what I would do; I would not be conned into buying because of a better price and buying all these books because you have no way of knowing if it is going to work here. It might in Illinois or Texas, but it may not work here. I would worry about those programs especially since budgets and people are in pretty hard times. In this town people are a little upset about their taxes too and that is another problem you guys will have. It is not your fault, you guys did a good job in the last two years; you really did in cutting the budget. There are other things you can do and to show people you can do them and give them the back-up pages that you would have that is very important.

Mr. Houser: Anyone else? Mr. Sarno.

Mr. Scott Sarno, 7 Herkimer Court – I think you addressed it, you don't know the direction the state plans on going yet, so until you do you basically have to prepare yourselves for the worst and hope for the best, I guess.

I know it has been talked about in the past, one is the Edward School. It has been belted around for many years. I don't know if there is any discussion or thought process in maybe getting rid of it or if there is any interest in it. I am sure you have looked at it and thought about it.

Mr. Houser: Yes, we just happened to get the appraisal this last week. We intend to have that discussion before the next Board meeting and try to make a decision on what we are doing in a short period of time.

Mr. Bing: I think the town is getting their own appraisal as well so that we can compare.

Mr. Sarno: That is basically found money which would help in a huge way. I know and I have heard discussed back when I was on the Board and probably discussed up to this point is bussing. This has been a big issue in the town and the state last year. I have heard privatizing would save us money but I am staunchly against it. If more people would look at it, privatizing the bussing is great for one year but when you get down the line in three or four years and your contract expires they got you over a barrel because you have no more bus drivers or buses or mechanics or garage so basically you are at their whim and whatever they want to charge you. It is an old trick that old superintendents used to use here, let's not look towards the future, but for quick fixes and I won't worry about it because I won't be here. I just hope you don't, in end, decide on looking at that direction, I do not feel it is good for the future of this district.

Next, other districts around us are doing Pay-to-Play for all after-school activities including sports and clubs. I believe you should make them more self-sufficient and let them fund themselves especially the after-school clubs that aren't based on your core-curriculum activities. You should make sure like the fishing club, for example, if it is costing us in paying a stipend for the coach or advisor to it and the overtime and you only have four or five kids is it fair to the taxpayers to pay for something that isn't part of education. Really it isn't when you are talking about taxes going up \$1,300 a year and I know they will go up again this year. Eventually, people will say, and I know I have spoken to people already, that is it I can't do anymore, I am moving out of town and going because they can't afford it. It is great to have great schools and have all these extra things but it gets to a point when you have to say what is more important to be able to pay my mortgage on time, my taxes or having free this or that. Somewhere it has to stop. That is something to look at; you should make these things more towards paying for themselves with charging individuals, whether it is athletes, drama club, fishing club, etc. They should be paying for themselves. In the football, baseball teams with 60-70 kids, they could fund themselves by charging \$100 a kid to be on the team. When you get to the smaller ones is it worth what it costs the taxpayers. That is something you will have to decide.

Mr. Houser: Anyone else? Seeing nobody else, do we have a motion to close public session?

Mrs. Pilovsky: So moved.

Mr. Quiroz: Second

Mr. Houser: All those in favor signify by saying Aye.

All: Aye

Mr. Houser: Opposed? Motion carried.

Here we will have an open session for the Board members if you want to say anything about the budget. We did a survey for each of the Board members to fill out too so we can take that to the budget committee. Feel free to ask questions if you want.

Mrs. Pilovsky: I have a few things. We did look at the health benefits last year so we are saving on that this year. We also worked with the technology department who looked at the telephone company, long distance, etc. and we are saving in that area also.

They call me the penny-pincher and we look at everything, but there is always ways to save and we will continue to work on that.

Mr. Mihalik: We are anticipating savings with the energy but I am looking at adding a few items that may cost us a few dollars that I feel makes good sense like putting cameras in all the buses. I think that is very, very important and making sure that we do have the security that we need in the schools. I think we have to look at the savings we anticipate from the solar and from our energy programs. That should be substantial and should help the budget. I am in the process of emailing you those recommendations.

Mr. Cloke: I am thinking about maybe cutting the SRO in Brackman because that will be over \$60,000 because they went up 4%. We don't have to pay unemployment on the police officer if he goes back. That is another big thing not having to pay unemployment. Possibly eliminate a guidance counselor in the elementary school and some of the stipends for intra-murals and yearbook and maybe a couple of other things that may be unnecessary.

Mr. Adorno: For myself, I will spend a decent amount of time looking at all of our stipends. I would like to take a strong look at all of our after-school extracurricular activities and all sports. I won't say I am a fan of paying to participate, but we run many youth programs here and know it will effect enrollment. I do hear when taxpayers say it may not be fair for them to have to pay for some of those extracurricular activities including sports so I would like to take a good look at all of this and I have been looking at this for the last two years. It is something I am very interested in. Frank also brought up a very good point and I would like to get more information in regard to that reserve with the insurance. I would like to pay more attention with that because I think we have done a good job with the insurance we have but if there is more there to manage and keep cost down I would like to look at that as well.

As far as where I think we are failing at some of our younger ages, I am concerned of what we have in our sex education in the schools and I am concerned with some of things happening in our middle school with education curriculum. There are concerns where we may be missing the boat on a few things. Again, our special education we know the amount of money it costs and I would like to continue what you have been doing in regard to bringing them all here into district and trying to absorb some of that cost. We still owe them a lot, we have to educate them and provide all of the educational lifestyle for them and many things they deserve. There is a lot of money there.

Our bus fleet – I will say I will go on record to say I will not ever support privatizing bussing until I have 100% solid, concrete data to back that up. In the meantime that is something I cannot see; we can continue working with what we have done. I believe the taxpayers will see the savings in what we have already implemented in the last year and one-half. We have done a very good job, I am satisfied with it and I will come up with some other things later.

Mr. Quiroz: Also, Mr. Pesci mentioned about our facility usage and renting some of our facilities. I think that is something that needs to be looked at and encouraged as a way to make money and as a member of the budget committee I definitely look at the budget and other ways of gaining money and cutting expenses and I will share those ideas at other meetings. The next budget meeting if I am not mistaken is January 27 and at these meetings I will be glad to share my other ideas.

Mrs. Pilovsky: I have something else to add. I don't know if this is possible. We can talk to the union representative and see if there is any way possible, I know the contract is up in 2012 but maybe we can speak to them and in the coming year agree to a zero raise. It does not hurt to go up to them and ask if it is possible if it will help us. Quick question, what is the total number in class, what is the ratio, Mr. Bing?

Mr. Bing: In elementary schools at about 23/24 right now which is a three-four student increase from years before.

Mrs. Pilovsky: Right.

Mr. Bing: If you are projecting out with a 2% cap and this is not just specific to Barnegat you are looking state-wide average at elementary level of 26/27 students. In the middle school we average about 25/26 and the high school 27/28. With a 2% cap in the middle school you will go up to 28/29 and the high school if a hard 2% cap you are looking at 30+ in the next two or three years.

Mr. Adorno: We did have last year a couple of elementary school classes at 26/27.

Mr. Bing: Most districts you will see those will become common. Your bubble over the next couple of years will be 30/31 elementary level. The 2% cap will make it very difficult to hire personnel.

Mr. Cloke: We pay a stipend over a certain amount of kids don't we?

Mr. Bing: At the middle school and high school levels.

Mr. Cloke: Is that 25 students?

Mr. Allison: Once they hit 26 we have to pay them \$1500 for the whole year.

Mrs. Pilovsky: I would like that to happen. I am also not a fan of charging for after-school sports and activities but if we have to we have to. We have to look at everything. We may need to look into combining departments whether it is guidance or whatever, we all have to pull together. Also middle school sports, the same thing with the high school.

Mr. Houser: I just wanted to comment that we all know what we had to do last year. We had over \$3M cut out of our state aid and laid off 65 employees in the district and we cut transportation by \$500,000 or more and programs. We cut everything we could think of to the

best of our ability because of losing all the state aid. This year, based on looking on the medical increase which did not go up anywhere near where it was the year before at 25%; they are talking about 10% this year so it did not go up as much. However, looking at those figures, the wage increase that was negotiated previously before we had all of these problems with losing state aid and everything, we are looking at having to cut over \$1M from the budget and then if the Governor takes more state aid away this district will be devastated. How can we cut another 65 employees; we are talking about teachers and programs and classes and class sizes will increase even more and I understand also people's taxes are going up and we have to be sure they do not continue to go up and do the best we can on the taxes but this is what we are stuck with this year. We are in a position that we have taken this district over the last three or four years and put it in the right direction. We were doing all the stuff they are talking about now, the superintendent salary, the dual positions people were taking and getting rid of the Assistant Superintendent position. We did all of those things before it was even talked about. It happened on this Board, and we are where we need to be so the state has to stop coming in here. They should look at the fiscal responsibility of each district and do it that way and see what cuts they have made instead of just taking state aid because we all know sitting here that we cannot cut our budget millions of dollars this year like we did last year. There is no way possible without affecting the quality of education of the students. It will be impossible to do it. We have a long list of things we are going to look at and put the budget together. We are hearing rumors about what the Governor will take in state aid again and we have no facts or answers yet. We may not find out until he releases those numbers in the middle of March. We have a Board meeting the third week in March so everyone will know right away. We will work on the budget; we have been doing it and meeting periodically but as of this week we will start crunching everything and see where we are and go back through the numbers and see what the increases we have to deal with. We are not looking to add anything, we can't add anything; if anything it will be subtracting again because there is no way to balance the budget and we have to subtract. Last year we did go to the union and had discussions with them and they were not willing to take a zero increase. They did work with us and did do some things; they took the position that they had a contract and they were not going to give back the raise.

Mr. Bing: If you read the newspaper you saw that six to eight executive county superintendents were cut state-wide so you might see that as a political move or a trend to go towards regional executive superintendents. I am sure a lot more will come out of that tool box.

Mr. Adorno: I have one more question; we have one more year with the BEA?

Mrs. Pilovsky: Yes, this is the last year.

Mr. Houser: If no other questions or comments we will move on to Old Business.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Houser: Do we have any Old Business? Seeing none, we do have one motion under New Business. It is a personnel matter and we can go into Executive Session if need be. It is up to the Board members if you want to do it in open.

Mr. Montenegro: I have one matter of a proposed settlement of a litigation that the insurance carrier has been defending. As part of our policy we have a consent provision in there that the Board needs to consent for any settlement. We can go to closed on that, it should not take any longer than ten minutes.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Houser: May I have a motion to go into Executive Session?

Mrs. Pilovsky: So moved

Mr. Cloke: Second

Mr. Houser: All those in favor signify by saying Aye.

All: Aye

Mr. Houser: Motion carried. We should only be 5-10 minutes.

**ROLL CALL**

Mr. Adorno	Present
Mr. Cloke	Present
Mr. Mihalik	Present
Mrs. Pilovsky	Present
Mrs. Sarno	Present
Mr. Quiroz	Present
Mr. Houser	Present

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Houser: Under New Business we have two motions. We have a motion to hire Paul Krauss at Step 1 - prorated as a substitute from January 10, 2011 to February 11, 2011 for Mr. Anthony Orrechio who will be on a paternity leave. Do we have a motion?

Mrs. Pilovsky: So moved

Mrs. Sarno: Second

Mr. Houser: Any discussion? Roll Call

Mr. Adorno	Yes
Mr. Cloke	Yes
Mr. Mihalik	Yes
Mrs. Pilovsky	Yes
Mrs. Sarno	Yes

Mr. Quiroz                Yes  
Mr. Houser                Yes

Mr. Houser: Motion to consent to settlement of J.M. lawsuit as set forth in 1-4-11 proposal of insurance carrier counsel. There is no financial pay-out by district, only payment by insurance company. Do we have a motion?

Mrs. Pilovsky: So moved

Mr. Mihalik: Second

Mr. Houser: Any discussion? Roll Call

Mr. Adorno                Yes  
Mr. Cloke                 Yes  
Mr. Mihalik               Yes  
Mrs. Pilovsky             Yes  
Mrs. Sarno                Yes  
Mr. Quiroz                Yes  
Mr. Houser                Yes

#### VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Houser: Do we have a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Mrs. Sarno: So moved

Mr. Cloke: Second

Mr. Houser: All those in favor signify by saying Aye.

All: Aye

Mr. Houser: Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Dean Allison, Business Administrator/Board Secretary





