

MOONACHIE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Office of the Business Administrator/Board Secretary

MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING

Robert L. Craig School
Virtual Meeting
March 31, 2020

Call to order by Board President Meeting opened at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Members Present: David Vaccaro
Charles Pallas
James Campbell
Matthew Vaccaro
Edmond Monti

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Dr. Jonathan Ponds, Superintendent/Principal
Laurel Spadavecchia, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
James Knipper, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Dennis McKeever, Board Attorney

Pledge of Allegiance

State of Compliance:

The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to ensure the rights for the public to have advance notice of, and to attend, the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of the Act, the Business Administrator/Board Secretary has caused notice of this meeting to be sent, announcing time and place thereof, and, to the extent known, the agenda of this meeting to the following: Borough of Moonachie and Office of the Superintendent of Schools.

- Resolved to move to Executive Session

In accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, the Moonachie Board of Education shall conduct a closed executive session pursuant to the exception(s) prescribed by N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 for the purpose of discussing: FY 2020-2021 Budget and personnel for budgeting purposes. It is anticipated that the length of time of this executive session will be 30 minutes.

Motion:

Seconded:

Action taken:

- Acceptance of Minutes of March 10, 2020, closed session and regular session, and Superintendent Report – Attachment 1.1
 Motion: Edmond Monti
 Seconded: Matthew Vaccaro
 Action taken: 5 Ayes. Motion Approved.

- Acceptance of Correspondence None.

- Superintendent’s Report

Dr. Ponds updated the Board on the school operations during the COVID-19 mandated shut-down. Currently only essential employees are allowed to enter the building which is approximately 5 employees. Students have been engaged and active in their learning. Dr. Ponds thanked Mr. Knipper, Mrs. Spadavecchia and the staff for an outstanding job and to Ed Monti for his service in helping to distribute meals to the Moonachie students out in the community. Dr. Ponds announced that we have distributed mifi’s to students without internet access and are awaiting another shipment of 4 for more students in this situation. Dr. Ponds thanked the Board of Education for being responsive to the district in their need.

Matt Vaccaro also thanked the staff on their hard work during this time. As a teacher, he realizes all the effort that’s involved to keep education going.

David Vaccaro asked how attendance was going to which Dr. Ponds replied that 90% of students are attending. Staff are calling homes and following up on students to keep them engaged. David Vaccaro also inquired if any students are showing signs of fear. Dr. Ponds replied yes and assured the Board that the Child Study Team is notified and has reaching out to students how have been identified as in need of their services on a daily basis. Mr. Monti asked if anything has been sent out to families to inform them of what services are available. Dr. Ponds replied that correspondence has been with existing identified students, but he can also send a phone blast out to inform all parents as well.

Mr. Monti inquired if computers or other learning devices were given out. Dr. Ponds stated that less than 10% of the population needed it and we were able to distribute laptops to the ones that did. Mr. Monti also asked about tutoring and Dr. Ponds replied that the YMCA is working on a tutoring schedule soon.

Matt Vaccaro voiced a concern regarding video chatting with students and Dr. Ponds replied that teachers involved in video chatting my notify him and have a signed consent form.

James Campbell asked if we were aware of any parents feeling anxiety to which Dr. Ponds replied yes regarding assignments. Therefore, the district has created a 36 hour rule for assignments to be completed and teachers have been instructed to abide by this rule.

Motion: Edmond Monti
Seconded: Matthew Vaccaro
Action taken: 5 Ayes. Motion Approved.

- Public Comments - (Agenda Items Only)

In addition, please be aware that employees of this School District retain the right of privacy and shall retain all rights regarding defamation and slander according to the laws of New Jersey. The Board shall not be held liable for comments made by members of the public and, in order to protect the privacy rights of employees in the District, the Board shall not respond to statements made by the public of or about District employees.

2. Finance

Motion: Charles Pallas
Seconded: James Campbell
Action taken: 5 ayes. Motion Approved.

1. Resolved to approve the Bills and Claims against the Board of Education for equipment, materials and supplies furnished and delivered, and for work done and performed for March 2020 for a total of \$289,769.07 –Attachment 2.1
2. Resolved to approve the Check Register for the month of February 2020 for \$292,171.44 - Attachment 2.2
3. Resolved to approve the Payroll Check Register for March 13, 2020 for \$99,773.95 – Attachment 2.3
4. Resolved to approve the the Payroll Check Register for March 31, 2020 for \$97,512.90 – Attachment 2.4
5. Resolution whereas, the Moonachie Board of Education has a transportation contract with First Student and, due to the enactment of Executive Order 104 (Murphy) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools have been closed to students until further notice; and

Whereas, the emergency closure of the Robert L. Craig School and Wood-Ridge High School has also caused the suspension of services provided by First Student to transport students to and from school; and

Whereas, bus company vendors may be forced to lay off bus drivers and cancel our routes for the future which will force the district to bid out all routes at a potential higher cost that offered in a renewal of the routes at the current prevailing Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase of 1.7%; and

Whereas, even though services aren't being currently rendered, the cost of not paying these contracts can potentially be more detrimental to districts than paying for the maintaining of these contracts in the future.

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that the Moonachie Board of Education authorizes the continued payment of its bus contracts for the transportation of students to and from school and

Be it Further Resolved, that continuing payment of bus contracts shall be based on the fact that some fixed costs are not being incurred during times that bus routes are not being provided; and

Be it Further Resolved, that continuing payment of bus contracts shall only be made upon the express conditions that First Student guarantee the contracts for existing routes continue for the 2020-2021 school year at a renewal increase up to the CPI 1.7% and that it provide the district with certified payrolls confirming that bus drivers are being paid, and

Be it Further Resolved, that bus contracts for field trips and other non-home to school bus routes shall not be included in the continued compensation authorized by this Resolution.

A discussion of Motion 2.5 occurred in which the Board felt that the continuance of payments to First Student would be less detrimental to the district than to lose the guaranteed rate of increase to no more than the CPI rate of increase for the 2020-2021 school year. The Board unanimously voted to approved Motion 2.5

3. Policy None.

Motion:

Seconded:

Action taken:

4. Personnel None.

Motion:

Seconded:

Action taken:

5. Curriculum

Motion: Edmond Monti
Seconded: Matthew Vaccaro
Action taken: 5 Ayes. Motion Approved.

1. Resolved to approve the following workshop:

Destination	Date	Cost
Handle with Care Instructor Recertification Program Clarksburg, NJ - Kathleen Reilly	April 09, 2020 or makeup date TBD	\$450.00 plus travel reimbursement

6. Facilities

Motion:
Seconded:
Action taken:

Discussion of Professional Cleaning due to COVID-19 – Attachment 6.1
Laurel Spadavecchia presented the quotes from three vendors to clean and disinfect the school along with her recommendation on the course of action. Edmond Monti suggested having the vendor provide a list of chemicals used to keep on file. David Vaccaro suggested keeping a folder of all COVID-19 related expenses together to report to FEMA for possible reimbursement.

1. Resolved to appoint Servpro as the Professional Cleaning and Remediation service provider to clean, disinfect and virucide the entire school building due to COVID-19 – (see attachment 6.1)

7. Old Business None.

Motion:
Seconded:
Action taken:

8. New Business None.

Motion:
Seconded:
Action taken:

9. Information Items None.

10. Discussion Items

Laurel Spadavecchia asked Mr. Dennis McKeever, Esq., his opinion of the proposed Bill A3902 regarding the allowance of municipalities to withhold or delay tax payments to school districts. In his opinion, knowing that the school districts’ main source of revenue comes from the tax levy, he would think that municipalities would continue to make payments to school districts. Ms. Kathleen Kinsella, as Councilwoman, stated that this bill was already

discussed at the last council meeting and the Borough is prepared to continue to make payments on the 1st and 2nd quarter of 2020 and further discussions will occur.

11. Public Comments None.

Open: 7:20 p.m.

Closed: 7:21 p.m.

12. Adjournment at 7:23 p.m.

Motion: Matthew Vaccaro

Seconded: James Campbell

Action taken: 5 Ayes. Motion Approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurel Spadavecchia

Laurel Spadavecchia
Board Administrator/ Board Secretary