

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF PLAINFIELD  
IN UNION COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

Minutes of a **WORK & STUDY MEETING** of the Board of  
Education Held on Thursday, June 8, 2016

A **WORK & STUDY MEETING** of the Board of Education of the City of Plainfield was held this day in the Plainfield High School conference room. Notice had been given to the Board members and to the Courier-News, Star Ledger, Public Library, City Clerk, Plainfield Police Department, and posted in all Plainfield Public Schools and on the Plainfield Public Schools' website. Mr. Craig Smith, Board Secretary called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m. and the following action took place:

- I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- II. WELCOME

WELCOME to a WORK & STUDY MEETING of the Plainfield Board of Education. Members hope you will find the meeting interesting and informative. We thank you for taking the time to attend. Please be advised this and all meetings of the Board are open to the media and public, consistent with the Open Public Meetings Act (Ch. 231 Laws of 1975), and that the advance notice required therein has provided to the Courier-News and Star Ledger on Thursday, June 2, 2016 to be advertised on Saturday, June 4, 2016.

- III. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Mrs. Emily E. Morgan, President  
Ms. Lynn B. Anderson  
Mr. Terrence S. Bellamy, Sr.  
Mr. John C. Campbell  
Mrs. Carletta D. Jeffers  
Ms. Carmencita T. Pile  
Mr. David M. Rutherford

Mr. Dorien Hurtt, absent  
Mr. Richard Wyatt, absent

ALSO PRESENT

Mrs. Anna Belin-Pyles, Superintendent  
Mrs. Lisa Fittipaldi, Esq.  
Mr. Craig Smith

The Plainfield Board of Education began the public session of the Work & Study Meeting at 6:50 p.m.

#### IV. REMARKS FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Mrs. Morgan remarked by informing public that the format of the meeting would be changed. The public would ask questions of the agenda until 7:40. At that time, the Board would retire to executive session to begin board training. Mrs. Morgan also informed the public that questions would be answered by the administration.

Mr. Campbell asked "how could he read all of the agenda if he just received it".

Mr. Smith explained that only item K1 had been added to the finance agenda and that was the only change.

Mr. Campbell stated he was confused because the format had changed. He also asked why it had been changed.

Mrs. Morgan said a special meeting may be called and a robocall may be done as well to inform public.

Mrs. Terri Slaughter-Cabbell (public) asked about the change in format.

Mr. Michael Marcus, legal counsel, presented the Office of Fiscal Accountability and Compliance (OFAC) report on change of election date based on a complaint. Mr. Marcus explained that OFAC found that there was no violation of the Open Public Meetings Act.

Mr. David Graves (public) asked the legal counsel if he disagreed with the report. Mr. Graves also asked if he wanted a copy, what process should be employed. Mr. Marcus stated that an OPRA request should be done.

Mr. Campbell asked who would be responsible for change in election. Mr. Marcus stated that everyone is responsible.

Ms. Pile asked if the Board voted against it, would she still be a board member. Mr. Marcus said that the Board was simply discussing the findings of OFAC and that the report was reviewed and discussed. Mr. Marcus stated that is all that is required of the Board.

Ms. Pile stated that the resolution reads as if she agrees with the report.

Mrs. Morgan recommended tabling of item J1 on the finance agenda.

Ms. Pile stated she did not like the wording of the resolution.

Mr. Marcus stated that the resolution simply reflected what the report said.

V. REMARKS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

NONE.

VI REMARKS FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Mr. Graves inquired about food service management committee report.

Ms. Anderson explained the process of vetting the various bidders to the public.

## XII. REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

### J1. Change of School Board Election (OFAC) Response

The Superintendent of Schools recommends and moved by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mr. Bellamy for adoption of the following:

#### RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS**, the Office of Fiscal Accountability and Compliance of the Department of Education (OFAC) received an anonymous complaint regarding the changing of the school board election date from November to April by Resolution of the Board of Education on November 10, 2015 and,

**WHEREAS**, OFAC investigated the anonymous complaint; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Open Public Meetings Act provides adequate notice is defined as: "Written advance notice of at least 48 hours giving the time, date and location and to the extent known the agenda of any regular, special or rescheduled meeting which notice shall accurately state whether formal action may or may not be taken and which shall be (1) prominently posted in at least one public place reserved for such or similar announcements, (2) mailed, telephoned, telegraphed or hand-delivered to at least two newspapers which newspaper shall be designated by the public body to receive such notices because they have the greatest likelihood of informing the public within the area of jurisdiction of the public body of such meetings... and (3) ... the filing shall be with the clerk or chief administrative office of such other public body "; and,

**WHEREAS**, no finding was made by OFAC in the report made by OFAC, that the provisions of OPMA were violated, and,

**WHEREAS**, as stated in the OFAC report, the resolution for the change of the election date was introduced as a "walk in" resolution and not listed as part of the previously published meeting agenda of November 10, 2015 and,

**WHEREAS**, OFAC reviewed the minutes of the November 10, 2015 Board meeting and stated in the report that the Resolution was introduced and discussed at the public session of the meeting; and,

**WHEREAS**, OFAC stated Board Bylaw 9323/9324 provides for advance preparation and notice of the agenda; and,

**WHEREAS**, OFAC stated there would be no additional cost if the election remained in November; and,

**WHEREAS**, no finding was made by OFAC in the report that the "walk in" Resolution for the change of the election date is improper, and

**WHEREAS**, OFAC required the Board to publicly review and discuss the report made by OFAC at a public meeting no later than 30 days after receipt of the report and adopt a resolution certifying the report was discussed in a public meeting,

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, the Plainfield Board of Education has caused this Resolution to be discussed and reported on at its June 8, 2016 meeting in accordance with the requirements of the OFAC report dated May 5, 2016 received by the Board on May 10, 2016.

**The motion carried on a roll-call vote with seven members in favor. None were opposed.**

Mr. Campbell moved and seconded by Mr. Bellamy and unanimously approved by the Board to go into executive session at 7:50 p.m.

Mr. Bellamy moved and seconded by Ms. Pile and approved by the seven board members to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 p.m. Mr. Hurtt opposed.

Reported by,

Craig Smith, Board Secretary  
CS/bsc