

April 26, 2010

A Special Joint Meeting of the Lafayette Township Committee and Lafayette Township School Administration was held on Monday, April 26, 2010 at 7:00pm. in the Municipal Building, 33 Morris Farm Road, Lafayette, NJ.

Members Present Mayor Bruning, Committeemen Hughes, Corcoran,
D'Angeli and Sweeney

Members Absent None

Also Present Clerk Fedish, Superintendent Keith Neuhs,
Board Administrator Hessler

Mayor Bruning opened the meeting stating it was being held in compliance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231, Sections 4 & 13.

Mr. Neuhs said not many cuts were found since they made cuts prior to their presentation to the Township Committee at the April 6, 2010 meeting. He explained they can cut one (1) aide for \$12,000. However, he was told by Hardyston that two (2) special needs students will be coming in September; and they cannot budget for them until school begins.

Mayor Bruning asked if the teachers will agree to a pay freeze. Mr. Neuhs said they will not.

Committeeman Corcoran asked that a printout of each person's health benefits be submitted. Mrs. Hessler reviewed the costs.

Budget items were reviewed:

2670 – Other purchased services: Consultants, copier leases and internet.

2621 – Home Instruction: If a student is out of school for more than ten (10) days, home instruction must be provided.

2680 – General supplies: Computers and supplies for all classrooms

Special Ed Resource Room: Upper grade classroom for special needs students/projecting 45 special needs students.

Pre-School eliminated.

School Sponsored Activities: \$12,250 for all activities. Track, Jr. Honor Society and Chess to be eliminated in 2010-2011 budget but are looking for sponsors. Also, looking for sponsors for graduation and 5th grade Stokes trip.

6280 – Tuition to Other: Two (2) students sent to other districts for special needs. Committeeman Corcoran asked about a program in the school for other students to come to Lafayette. Mr. Neuhs said they did try to work with Frankford for a self-contained classroom.

6482 – Purchase Professional Educational Services: Occupational and Physical Therapy for students.

6701 – Extra Service: One (1) out of district student needs a nurse at all times.

6490 – Guidance: Mr. Neuhs explained this person handles crisis counseling, high school placements and trains staff. Committeeman D'Angeli asked if the Assistant Principal can do this job. Mr. Neuhs explained guidance is not a mandated but needed position. He does not feel the school can do without a guidance counselor. Committeeman Corcoran suggested this be reduced to part-time and be on an as needed basis. Mr. Neuhs, also, explained why they need the child study team and said they were

on a part time basis with no benefits. Mr. Neuhs said the Guidance Counselor will be part time next year with no benefits.

6790 - Professional Education Services: PT Curriculum Coordinator shared with Frankford Township School.

7605 – Professional Education Services: New reading series and needed training.

6995 – Elimination of Board of Education membership and fees. Mr. Neuhs stated it is still mandated that the Board belong to the School Board Association; and teachers receive continuing training.

Committeeman D'Angeli asked about the cost of oil. Mrs. Hessler feels they may have a better year as prices have decreased some.

Transportation Costs/Savings: Mrs. Hessler explained they would need to pull out of the joint-ship. If they find there are no savings and want to rejoin, it would cost much more. Costs now are less than other school districts.

Electricity - Savings and solar: Mrs. Hessler said they are trying to be more energy efficient and could possibly drop more. Mr. Neuhs said they are pursuing program with Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative. Regarding solar, Mr. Neuhs said they need a 40% grant from the State; however, this can only be obtained by a referendum and is not cost effective. They will continue to monitor this. Motion sensors have been discussed and are being investigated.

Tuition Reimbursement: Mrs. Hessler said the teacher must be tenured; and the contract states up to a total of \$6,500 for reimbursement. Mr. Neuhs said the teacher must receive his approval in order to receive reimbursement.

12700 – Other Employee Benefits: Buy-outs and custodial clothing maintenance come out of this line. Mrs. Hessler and Mr. Neuhs receive disability reimbursement.

Health Benefits: Mrs. Hessler said she is speaking to a broker about investigating other programs.

Salary Increases: Mrs. Hessler said the custodial staff budget included 3.6%, the same as the teachers. She reviewed the teacher's steps and guides and the reductions and salaries.

Assistant Principal: Mr. Neuhs said an assistant principal is not mandated by the State; but they need to have a superintendent. Committeeman Bruning asked about the assistant principal being part-time. Mr. Neuhs explained the State requires a lot of paperwork and reports. He feels the position is important and needed as that person handles many staff and student disciplinary problems.

Buildings & Grounds Coordinator, Custodian and Teachers' Aides duties and work reviewed. Mr. Neuhs said they are planning on three (3) less aides for the next school year. He stated the IEP (Individual Educational Plan) dictates the child's aides and programs.

Teaching time was reviewed. Mr. Neuhs said there is the possibility of the day being reduced from eight (8) to seven (7) periods. The teachers are scheduled to be in school from 8:15am.-3:15pm.

Intervention & Referral Services (IRS): The assistant principal oversees this program and works with the Guidance Counselor and students. The Child Study Team, including the social worker and psychologist, handles special education students.

Mr. Neuhs feels the Guidance Counselor is not a luxury. Mayor Bruning asked about the teachers handling some of the scheduling. Mr. Neuhs said the Guidance Counselor is needed to coordinate scheduling.

Mr. Neuhs said there is the possibility that one (1) teacher will be retiring; and they will need a replacement. The starting salary would be at a minimum of \$41,726.

Mr. Neuhs said letters were sent to the Lafayette Education Association (LEA) with concerns; and he has not received a favorable response.

At this time, Mayor Bruning opened the meeting to the public.

Mr. James McGrath, 47 Beaver Run Road, asked about the health benefits for the Guidance Counselor and Librarian. Mrs. Hessler said they do not receive health benefits as they are below the benefit level.

Discussion ensued regarding the custodians and secretaries increases of 3.6% and allowances for conferences, mileage, workshops and meals. Dues are, also, paid for the Superintendent's Association and Sussex County Roundtable Association for the Superintendent. Mrs. Hessler's and Mr. Neuhs' health benefits are Direct 10; therefore, they are reimbursed the difference of Direct 15.

It was decided the next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 6, 2010 at 5:00pm.

With there being no further business, motion by Corcoran, seconded by D'Angeli, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

ANNA ROSE FEDISH, RMC
Municipal Clerk