

**Rochelle Park Board of Education
Caucus Meeting Minutes– 7:30 P.M.
November 3, 2014**

- I. Call to Order and Flag Salute**
- II. Roll Call**

Board Members	Present	Absent
Mr. Mark Scully, Vice President	X	
Mr. Sam Allos	X	
Mrs. Arlene Buyck	X	
Mrs. Teresa Cravello	X	
Mrs. Maria Lauerman	X	
Mrs. Dimitria Leakas	X	
Mr. Jay Esposito, President	X	

Others Present:

Harry Groveman, Interim Superintendent,
Christine Werner, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Brian Cannici, Acting Principal
Ellen Kobylarz, Board Recording Secretary

III. Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P. L. 1975 Announcement – by Board President

In accordance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, I wish to announce that:

“The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. Notices announcing the date, time and place for this Caucus Meeting were sent to all concerned individuals, associations and sent to the The Record and Our Town, in accordance with Chapter 231, P.L. 1975.

IV. Superintendent’s Report- Dr. Groveman reported the following:

- There will be a resolution on the regular agenda for the following workshops, Mrs. Hamilton ‘Balancing Literacy “Preparing for PARCC”, Mrs. Ferla “Preparing for PARCC”, Mrs. Sacco “Supporting our Ells”.
- School Violence Awareness week was held during the month of October. Mr. Cannici will report on the activities held.
- Field trips on the agenda: 2nd Grade to see “Miss Nelson is Missing” The Band and Chorus will have a trip to Bristol Manor Nursing home and the Rochelle Park Senior Citizens Meeting in December.
- Several policies and regulations are up for final approval.
- Discussion was held on the 2015-16 calendar, a final calendar was not decided on
- Discussion on renovation plans for the Library/Media Center and computer room.
- Approval is being sought to accept a grant to offset the cost of the 8th grade field trip to Trenton.

V. Principal’s Report Mr. Cannici reported the following:

- The faculty and administration worked on the Student Growth Objectives. Staff from the RAC will visit in November, Parent/Teacher conferences will be held the week of November 24th.
- Discussion on the activities during the month of October: Red Ribbon Week, Mix-It- Up-Day, Unity Day, Week of Respect and Week of Nonviolence
- Midland School now has a Twitter account, Mr. Cannici encouraged people to sign up and check it out.
- Midland School is conducting a food drive in conjunction with Helping Hands Ministry.
- The Halloween Dance took place last week. It ended earlier than the time on the permission slip. This is a safety concern. Mr. Cannici will be addressing this situation and seeing that it doesn't happen again.
- Discussion on getting students involved in environmental projects around the school building. Mr. Cannici will be coordinating this with Mr. Woods.

VI. Business Administrator's Report: Mrs. Werner reported the following:

- Reminder that elections are November 4th, Mrs. Werner wished the candidates good luck
- Resolution on the agenda to approve the municipalities continuing disclosure cooperation.
- 2014-2015 Annual Snow Removal/Plowing Quote will be placed on the agenda
- Annual Audit report presentation will take place at the regular meeting
- Referendum Project Bids- Infrastructure upgrade- windows replacement project re-bid opening will be held on November 20, 2014 at 2 P.M.

Building and Grounds- Mr. Woods was in attendance reported on the following:

- Roof work is continuing, Gym walls are being addressed, Holiday lights have been placed on the tree. LED sign - we are waiting for the sign to be delivered, Pro media is working in the building. There was some discussion regarding the work being done, on time, quality, etc.
President Esposito thanked Mr. Woods, Mr. Scully, Mr. Cronin, and Mr. Rogers for their help with the new sign.
- Sustainable NJ is the program that connects the students with the environment. There are grants we can apply for. Students are able to put this on they resumes for high school or colleges. A discussion continued regarding the program. *Mrs. Cravello asked if it would qualify for community service hours.* Mr. Woods stated it would for some of the hours. *Mr. Allos spoke to some people at the academies. They welcomed the idea.*

VII. Reports – Committee Action Items- Deferred to Regular Meeting:

Mrs. Lauerman reported on the Tree Lighting the school is having, stating that the Chorus & Band will be present. PTA may serve hot cocoa.

VIII. Public Questions on the Resolutions (Agenda Items Only)

During this portion of the meeting, the residents are invited to address the Board regarding agenda items only.

Motion by Mrs. Cravello, seconded by Mrs. Leakas, to open public comment at 8:00 P.M.

Roll Call 7-0
Motion carried

Mr. Verhassel, Forest Pl- asked if Dr. Zoeller was the same man who resigned in Westwood.
President Esposito replied yes

Mr. Greico, Peek St- stated he read about and saw on Facebook the issues Dr. Zoeller had in Westwood questioned why Rochelle Park would give him a 4.5 year contract. That's a long time. Why not a 1 year in case it doesn't work out. He (Mr. Greico) feels contract should have contained a probation period.

Mr. Trawinski, Forest Pl- stated Dr. Zoeller sat on the board with the current project manager- with everything that is going on with sensitive projects and things in his prior district did board know this.

President Esposito stated the board started looking in September went from 31 candidates to 9 to 2. Dr. Zoeller is the best one by far in the pool of candidates. The Board did 18/19, reference checks; every one came back stating Dr. Zoeller is a man of integrity and support him. The Board wanted to bring in someone that will take us to the next level; personally speaking he was the best one- he brought in a past Commissioner of Education to one of his interviews. It's a win-win situation.

Mr. Greico Peek St- Say in 2 years he has the right to leave or opt out on both sides.
President Esposito- 120 days on both sides- he has done unbelievable things I believe in this 100%. All the Board members did reference checks not just me.

Mrs. Kurian, Marinus St- Can you talk about the no confidence
President Esposito- stated he can't speak on it. That's between that Board and personnel. I feel confident that this is the right thing at this time.
Mr. Allos- you have to watch what you read- is he competent yes. Added that the Board called seven people he didn't know they were calling- anyone can write anything in the paper.
President Esposito asked Mrs. Lauerman to tell the audience who she called and what they said related to Dr. Zoeller.
Mrs. Lauerman explained that she called Ray Gonzales who had worked in the Wayne Public Schools- current Superintendent of Westwood- he stated 2 years later he is still benefiting from the work that Dr. Zoeller did there. She then quoted Mr. Gonzales as saying "It would be our gain".

Mr. DeFalco, Marinus St – inquired if everything in Westwood is done, from a legal standpoint, nothing still unresolved.
President Esposito- stated everything done

Dr. Zoeller- addressed the audience- Started by stating the citizens of Rochelle Park have every right to be concerned you only know me through the media outlets. He then asked that we give him the opportunity to prove himself, he has children of his own and only wants the best for kids. He has to work to earn both. Trust is earned- respect is earned.

Motion by Mrs. Buyck, seconded by Mrs. Lauerman, to close public comment at 8:17 P.M.
Roll Call 7-0
Motion carried

IX. Items for Board Action - Resolutions (If needed)

Note: Resolutions marked with an asterisk are as a result of Executive Session Discussion.

POLICY 4111 – HIRING – CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

1. BE IT RESOLVED that the Rochelle Park Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the “Board”) appoints Dr. Geoffrey W. Zoeller Jr. as the Superintendent of Schools for the Rochelle Park School District for the period from December 1, 2014 and ending on July 1, 2019.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Employment Agreement has been submitted to and approved by the Executive County Superintendent, according to standards adopted by the Commissioner of Education, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7-8(j).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves the Employment Agreement with Dr. Geoffrey W. Zoeller Jr. for the position of Superintendent of Schools for the foregoing period of appointment, which Employment Agreement is attached to this Resolution and made a part hereof.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby authorizes the Board President and the Board Secretary/Business Administrator to execute, on behalf of the Board, the Employment Agreement by and between the Board and Dr. Geoffrey W. Zoeller Jr.

Motion by Mr. Scully seconded by Mr. Allos,
Roll Call 7-0
Motion Carried

POLICY #4125 EMPLOYMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

2. RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Rochelle Park Board of Education appoint Kristine Berta to the position of Classroom Assistant from November 4, 2014 for the remainder of the 2014-2015 school year, hours not to exceed 27.5 per week (no benefits) at a salary of \$18.90 per hour.

Motion by Mr. Allos, seconded by Mr. Scully,
Roll Call 7-0
Motion Carried

X. Other Business:

XI. Open to the Public (Any Item)

During this portion of the meeting, the residents are invited to address the Board with any questions, comments or concerns that may be in respect to the operation of their school.

Motion by Mrs. Cravello, seconded by Mrs. Leakas, to open public comment at 8:20 P.M.
Roll Call 7-0
Motion carried

Mrs. Minichetti, Harvey Ave asked if the district had an update on the uniform survey.
Mr. Cannici replied stating approximately 200 responses in total to date- 136 yes/ 61 no 3 blank.
A discussion followed regarding the number of families in Midland School and what would be a target number for a good sample.

Mrs. Kraul W. Oldis St- inquired about aftercare and the # of students/staff ratio.
Mrs. Werner stated 2 additional staff members were being hired for next week.

Mr. DeFalco Marinus St.- asked about the recent application period that ended last Friday, have those positions been filled.

Dr. Groveman stated the positions being filled next week were for prior openings.

Mrs. Minichetti - asked about the referendum timeline

President Esposito stated it was moving along

There was a brief discussion regarding the window bid. Last time it was too high, only one company picked up a packet, there were a lot of jobs out there. This time four companies picked up packets, fewer jobs are out there so it's to the districts advantage, there's more competition for the project. Mrs. Leakas asked to have the bidding process explained again and Dr.

Groveman complied

Motion by Mrs. Buyck, seconded by Mrs. Lauerman, to close public comment at 8:26 P.M.

Roll Call 7-0

Motion carried

XII. Announcements

The next Regular Meeting will be held on Monday, November 10, 2014 at 7:30 P.M. in the Media Center.

XIII. Executive Session Announcement - Not Needed

XIV. Adjournment

Motion by Mrs. Lauerman, seconded by Mr. Scully, to adjourn meeting at 8:27 P.M.

Roll Call 7-0

Motion Carried