

**Rochelle Park Board of Education  
 Minutes Special Public Meeting-7:00 P.M.  
 July 29, 2013**

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

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Mr. Robert J Esposito, Vice President		<b>X (arrived 7:40)</b>
Mr. Sam Allos		<b>X(arrived 7:04)</b>
Mrs. Teresa Cravello	<b>X</b>	
Mrs. Maria Lauerman	<b>X</b>	
Mrs. Dimitria Leakas	<b>X</b>	
Mr. Mark Scully	<b>X</b>	
Mrs. Patricia Dee Bilka, President	<b>X</b>	

Others present:

- Bert Ammerman, Interim Superintendent
- Vincent Occhino, Interim Board Administrator/Board Secretary
- Ellen Kobylarz, Board Recording Secretary
- Charlie Koch
- Dr. Dennis McDonald
- Mrs. Christine Warner
- Members of the Referendum Committee
- Mr. Bob Cannici                      Mr. Richard Zavinsky
- Mr. Bob Verhasselt                Mrs. Schumk
- Mrs. Hernando                      Mrs. Vladyka
- Mr. Donatello                        Mr. Trawinski
- Mrs. Shean

**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 Regular Meeting were sent to all concerned individuals, associations and sent to the, The Record and The Our Town, in accordance with Chapter 231,P.L.1975”

*President Bilka introduced the members of the referendum committee, thanked them for the work that they accomplished and introduced Mr. Koch who proceeded with the presentation.*

**IV. Presentation on proposed referendum – Mr. Charlie Koch**

Mr. Koch began by thanking the committee and gave a history of the ROD grant program. This is the fourth installment of school funding for facilities projects. ROD stands for Regular Operating Districts. Level one projects, which is the category for Rochelle Park would be in, are given top priority and therefore go to the top of the list. There are two ways to obtain money for school improvements. One is by capitol reserve; with the district under a 2% cap we do not have the money to do the needed repairs. The second way is by a referendum. The district has been looking at ways to do repairs and save money. They recently entered into an energy audit. By upgrading projects like lighting you

can conserve energy and the program will pay for itself. While surveying the building for the energy audit it became apparent that there are other areas in desperate need of repair. A referendum committee was formed. They toured the building, filled out a questionnaire and listed the top priorities. The committee met to shape and scope out the size of the referendum to be recommended to the board. Mr. Koch continued with a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the areas in question. The boilers that heat the building are from 1953 and 1973. The average lifespan is 35 years, 40 years on the steam system. The size of a new boiler is the same as a refrigerator and a building of this size would require four units. Next were slides of the roof, showing seam bubbling which is leading to leaks and coping issues. Another area of concern is the stucco on the gym. It was installed without a drainage pad and parts of the stucco are gone. Water is getting into the walls and the blocks are starting to shift. There is also a problem with water infiltrating into the northeast corner of the building. Windows are single pane, not insulated. Lower areas are plexiglas and not up to code.

*Mr. Pascarella: Thiem Ave asked if they were tempered glass.*

Mr. Koch stated no.

Mr. Koch talked about the other areas in need. Floor tiles need to be replaced, leaders clogged and bathrooms need to be replaced. As well as new bathrooms in two classrooms. One is a kindergarten class which is required to have a bathroom. The district currently needs to ask permission from the Department of Education to use a classroom without a bathroom and one for a new autistic preschool program that needs to have its own bathroom. A new security system. Mr. Koch showed the audience a cost analysis of all the projects. Highlighting the items which were removed from the original estimate, such as lighting which as stated earlier will be addressed in the energy audit. The committee removed a generator that would have only powered the gym area and an OEM room.

*Mr. Ammerman explained that by creating a new autistic classroom it saved the district \$120,000.00. Sending three students out of district would cost \$300,000.00. As far as the restroom's, the committee is looking to replace the four most used bathrooms. Security updates are necessary.*

Mr. Koch explained that the security system would be server based with an access control. Police would have access. Other items were new exit doors, fire door smoke seals, new fire alarm, and a fully addressable system. The is a deadline for the grant submission is September 4<sup>th</sup>.

*Mr. Pascarella asked about handicapped access in bathrooms.*

Mr. Koch explained that would be addressed with the upgrade.

Mr. Koch explained the grant. If approved the board would have 18 months to act on the grant. The bond would be for 20 years, the cost of a house assessed at \$334,000.00 - \$93.41 per year, \$7.78 per month.

Mrs. Carol Grossi asked Mr. Koch to explain how the grant works.

Mr. Koch stated the residents vote on the entire referendum and the state will reimburse the district as the work is completed.

Mrs. Bugler: Oak St, with regard to the security system asked if there would be panic buttons in the hallway. Another local school district just installed them in the hallways.

Mr. Koch stated he could look into that.

Mrs. Pascarella asked about the length of time it would take to do the repairs and would it affect the school year.

Mr. Koch said it could be done in stages. Some of the work could be performed after hours. Boilers would be a summer project.

Mrs. Rizzo – Becker Ave: asked when the referendum would take place.

Mr. Koch stated the district is shooting for December but may push it to January. State could take 3 months to inform the board if they qualify for a grant. That may push the project back.

Mr. Pascarella asked how long the grant would be good for.

Mr. Koch stated once executed you don't lose the money.

Mr. Pascarella asked if the state could take the grants away and not offer them.

Mr. Koch explained they would approve and not take them away.

*Mr. Ammerman interjected that if the referendum passes then the district would adjust the calendar; see what work could be done at night. If the referendum doesn't pass, the boilers are at a point they could go at any time. If that happens, the district then contacts the county Department of Education office, they will send a letter to the town and the 100% of the cost will be put on the taxpayers.*

*Mr. Cannici- Hobart Ct: acknowledged that there will be people out there that are adversaries. If we don't sell it, it won't get passed. He explained that when he first came on this committee he wasn't sold until he saw it for himself. Floors sinking, if we don't have a combined effort it won't pass and passing this referendum is most important.*

*Mr. Ammerman explained that the committee went with what was necessary. This is the time. The grants will not be available after this round. This district does not have the money. This is the only way. We will be at Rochelle Park day, offer tours of the building, newsletters, and will meet with any group that would like a presentation. We will be presenting this to the township council.*

*Mr. Koch added that many districts are seeking these grants.*

*Mr. Grieco Peek St: had several questions, would new windows be up to egress code, for example bedroom windows in homes. Once the referendum is approved will changes be made to the original proposal? Will the plans for this be approved by the township building inspector or an out of town inspector? Was there any consideration to fire sprinklers in the common hallways at least? This building for example, has a cockloft.*

*Mr. Koch responded to each question with regard to the windows and usually not limited on how they can be opened. Would use this town's building inspector, I don't like to send it outside. Sprinkles, the committee didn't discuss it, might be able to add it later. This referendum is bare minimum not much you can change, it's all necessary improvements.*

*Mrs. Pascarella: asked why a generator was not included.*

*Mr. Koch explained the district was looking at other avenues to obtain a generator.*

*Mr. Pascarella asked about solar panels. Companies will install them for nothing.*

*Mr. Koch stated he just did explore that option for another local community and the end result would not have a big enough return. Market just isn't there now.*

*Mr. Scully asked about the lighting under ESIP plan.*

*Mr. Koch stated all paperwork submitted. State pays for the energy audit. Lease purchase that will pay for itself with no tax impact.*

*Mr. Trawinski- the options on paper, is that it. Can changes be made?*

*Mr. Koch: this is what will be shown to the state, changes can be made.*

*Mr. Trawinski - who makes the final decision, does the referendum committee still look at what we are getting.*

*Mr. Koch stated the BOE would get updates.*

*Mr. Trawinski wants to know if the committee is then still involved. He is selling, people are already asking questions.*

*Mr. Koch: that comes after the vote is approved.*

*Mr. Trawinski hearing that the last referendum had bad experiences wants to know that as a member he can be informed that what he sells doesn't change. After the vote, what is the next step?*

*Next step after vote*

*Mr. Ammerman explained that once the referendum is passed the Board of Education will make a decision on how they want to go forward. An option would be for the members of the referendum committee to stay on. This is the first time he's hearing there was a problem last time. His guess is that the board will draw from recourses within the town on making decisions. Mr. Ammerman explained that his term at Midland will expire at the end of November but he will stay on for this, because he believes that strongly in the need for this project.*

*President Bilka thanked the referendum committee, Mr. Ammerman, and Dr. Occhino who initiated this project.*

#### V. Public Questions on the Resolutions (Agenda Items Only)

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

Motion by Mr. Allos, seconded by Mr. Scully, to open public comment at 7:30 pm.

Roll Call 7-0

Motion carried

Questions were asked throughout the presentation

Motion by Mrs. Leakas, second by Mrs. Lauerman, to close public comment at 8:28 pm.

Roll Call 7-0

Motion carried

#### VI. Items for Board Action-Resolutions

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

- 1. RESOLVED: that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approve the submission of Renovations to Midland School #1 to the State Department of Education as a Level 1 Capital Project Requesting EFCFA ROD state grant funding.**

Motion by Mr. Esposito, seconded by Mrs. Cravello,

Roll Call 7-0

Motion carried

#### POLICY #3141- RESIGNATION

- \*2. RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept Dr. Vincent Occhino letter of resignation as the Business Administrator/Board Secretary for the Rochelle Park School District effective September 30, 2013.**

*Mr. Ammerman expressed that he and Dr. Occhino have worked together before, one month ago Dr. Occhino came to Mr. Ammerman and expressed that there was a change in circumstances and needs to be closer to home. Dr. Occhino has done wonderful things during his time here at Midland. He started this referendum.*

Motion by Mrs. Lauerman seconded by Mr. Allos

Roll Call 6-1 Mr. Scully approved reluctantly, President Bilka voted no

Motion carried

**POLICY#4111- HIRING CERTIFIED PERSONNEL**

**A1. RESOLVED:** that application be submitted to the County Superintendent of Schools in accordance with the revised statute N.J.S.A. 18A: 6-7.1 requesting authorization for emergent hiring pending completion of Criminal History Check for the following individual for the reason indicated and on the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Board of Education appoints Christine Werner to the position of Business Administrator/Board Secretary commencing on October 1, 2013 for the 2013/2014 school year at \$99,000.00 (prorated).

*Mr. Ammerman stated the district had an opening in the Business office with the resignation of Dr. Occhino. Mrs. Werner was recently appointed to fill another position within the business office and with her certified to do the job will offer a smooth transition into the BA position. We are very fortunate to have her. The board welcomed Mrs. Werner to the district.*

Motion by Mr. Scully, seconded by Mrs. Lauerman

Roll Call 7-0

Motion carried

**VIII. 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 Mr. Scully, seconded by Mrs. Cravello, to open public comment at 8:30 pm.

Roll Call 7-0

Motion carried

NONE

Motion by Mrs. Leakas, seconded by Mr. Allos, to close public comment at 8:31 pm.

Roll Call 7-0

Motion carried

**X. Announcements**

**The next Caucus Meeting will be held on Monday, August 12, 2013 at 7:00 PM in the Media Center with the Regular meeting immediately following.**

**XI. Executive Session Announcement (NOT NEEDED)**

**WHEREAS, the Rochelle Park Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") will convene in Executive Session to discuss confidential matters which include:**

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**NOW HEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED,** the Board shall move into Executive Session to discuss the above referenced matter(s).

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that the minutes of the executive session will provide as much information as possible without violating any applicable privilege or confidentiality so that the public can understand what was discussed and when available what the Board decision was...

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the minutes of the executive session will be released to the public in an appropriately redacted form within a reasonable period of time after the privilege or confidentiality is no longer applicable to such minutes.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the redacted portion of the executive session minutes will not be released until such time as the privilege or confidentiality is no longer applicable.**

## **XII. Adjournment**

Motion by Mr. Allos, seconded by Mrs. Cravello, to adjourn meeting at 8:32 pm.

Roll Call 7-0  
Motion carried