

Board of Education  
Nutley, New Jersey

April 2, 1990

The Special Meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Nutley, New Jersey was held in the Board Room, 375 Bloomfield Avenue, on Monday, April 2, 1990 at 7:32 p.m., with Dr. Anthony N. Baratta, President, presiding.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF MEETING:

Dr. Baratta read the following:

"According to the provisions of the 'Open Public Meetings Act' (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975) and P.L. 1990, c. 2, proper notice of this Special Meeting was made on March 5, 1990 and March 29, 1990. Said Notice was:

1. Published in The Nutley Sun on March 29, 1990.
2. Posted at the entrance of the Board Office.
3. Mailed or delivered, and/or telephoned to The Nutley Sun, the Star Ledger, the North Jersey Herald & News and the Nutley Journal.
4. Mailed or delivered, and/or telephoned to the Nutley Township Clerk.

"The purpose of this meeting is:

1. Conduct the Public Hearing on the 1990-91 school budget.
2. Adopt the 1990-91 school budget.
3. Adopt a resolution regarding the 1990 school election.
4. Conduct such other business that may properly come before the Board of Education.

"Formal action will be taken."

CALL OF ROLL:

The other members present at roll call were: Mr. Sam P. Battaglia, Mr. Frank V. Hermo, Mrs. Aileen Hresko, Mr. Robert J. Rusignuolo and Mrs. Rosalie C. Scheckel. Absent: Mrs. Sally Goodson, Mr. Charles W. Kucinski, Jr. and Mr. Charles J. Piro.

PRESENTATION OF 1990/1991 BUDGET:

Dr. Fadule stated that Mr. Sincaglia would present the budget without interruption, and at the appropriate point, Dr. Baratta would ask for questions.

Mr. Sincaglia discussed costs per pupil for 1988-89 and 1987-88, comparing Nutley with other Essex County districts, North Jersey K-12 districts, "D," "F" and "G" districts and every district in the state, and in all cases, Nutley's cost per pupil is significantly lower. He indicated that this is not a new phenomenon, as Nutley seems to be getting better each year.

Mr. Sincaglia reviewed how Nutley ranked in High School Proficiency Test (HSPT) scores and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores, stressing that Nutley students do very well on significantly less money per pupil, ranking #3 in the county on the HSPT, #6 on the SAT and #18 in cost per pupil.

Mr. Sincaglia then reviewed revenues, commenting that by law, every school district in New Jersey must have a balanced budget. He explained that this year Nutley lost \$1 of every \$5 in State aid that we were supposed to receive, a loss of almost 20% of our entitlement. Mr. Sincaglia stressed that the district is drastically underfunded by the State for the 1990-91 budget and, in actual monies, we will receive less than four years ago. This translates to six additional tax points for Nutley for the \$632,000 the district has lost. Mr. Sincaglia added that the Board has written to the Governor and State legislators, but chances are slim that we will receive this money.

Mr. Sincaglia further explained that we were only able to appropriate \$200,000 from Surplus since our Surplus is now under 3% of our budget. A New Jersey taxpayers' association presented a study which questioned if it was proper for districts to keep Surpluses higher than 10%, but Nutley's has been under 5% for the past few years. According to that group, a Surplus of \$2,000,000 would be appropriate for Nutley. In Nutley we put as much Surplus in the budget as possible to keep taxes down.

Mr. Sincaglia indicated that Surplus also helps pay for unanticipated expenditures. In the past few years, the district had unexpected asbestos work, an influx of Special Education students at tuitions of \$15,000 per student, a radon problem at Yantacaw School, a fire alarm system at Franklin School and an unexpected \$80,000 boiler replacement at Lincoln School.

Mr. Sincaglia then reviewed each major account grouping and highlighted significant changes which are taking place next year.

Mr. Sincaglia then mentioned the referendum, explaining that the wording was drafted by the Board's attorney and has to meet certain criteria in certain ways. He indicated that we must take care of asbestos in all the schools, explaining that we have taken the position that, while it is not necessary to remove every speck of asbestos in the district, there is asbestos that does demand removal. Had we taken the position of removing all asbestos, we would have incurred an expense of over \$3,000,000. Mr. Sincaglia further explained that the Board looked at what must and should be done and came up with a plan which our consultants, the Board and he felt was the right one at a cost of approximately \$900,000.

Mr. Sincaglia also commented that there is some doubt and dispute taking place now regarding the correct way to deal with asbestos, adding that he shares the doubt but cannot ignore the law. He added that there are areas where it is felt there is a danger to employees, and those will be addressed.

With regard to underground storage tanks, Mr. Sincaglia explained that there is one tank at each school, and they have been in place for about thirty years. They are made of steel with no protection, and they corrode and leak. He explained that State regulations cover heating oil tanks of over 2,000 gallons, and our tanks are all in excess of 10,000 gallons. The plan is to pull the tanks out of the ground, and in most cases, we will go to gas heat. Upgrades will be made to the heating plants at all schools. Mr. Sincaglia added that boilers will not be replaced, but burners will be replaced in six or seven of the seven schools. He stressed that we have no option since by September, 1991 all districts must either have all the tanks out of the ground or have a monitoring system in place. Mr. Sincaglia clarified that a monitoring system would have been feasible if the tanks had not been so old.

With regard to the high school roof, Mr. Sincaglia explained that there is wide-spread water infiltration, and the roof over the gymnasium, auditorium and a small portion of the art room must be replaced at an estimated cost of \$250,000.

Mr. Sincaglia mentioned that there would be two questions on the ballot - the tax levy and the referendum.

Mr. Sincaglia indicated that the amount of taxes consumed by the school district has been in the 40¢ to 43¢ range for many years, and the district's rate of increase over the years has been much less than the rate of the municipality. He added that the district takes about the same proportion of taxes each year.

Dr. Baratta thanked Mr. Sincaglia for his detailed presentation. Dr. Fadule also thanked Mr. Sincaglia for an excellent and thorough presentation, adding that Nutley is a very fine school district which is high in academic achievement while being low in cost. Dr. Fadule also commented that we feel very positive about this budget.

HEARING OF CITIZENS (Agenda Items Only):

Mrs. Barbara Carino, 38 Lake Street, questioned if the underground storage tanks had to be removed. Mr. Sincaglia responded that Department of Environmental Protection regulations require removal unless the local Code Enforcement Official feels it is a viable option to fill the tanks with sand. He added that pulling the tanks out will only cost about \$6,000 to \$7,000 per tank, while the cost of filling the tanks is only a few thousand dollars less.

Dr. Baratta read the following statement:

"I avail myself of the opportunity as President of the Board to offer a brief message.

"1. This is the eve of the completion of two years as President, which is a privilege conferred by my colleagues and I join a long list of persons who have served ably in this role.

"2. The 1989-1990 year has been difficult, challenging and satisfying in several respects.

"3. Difficulty:

"1. We had the difficult aspects of running the school district--after the budget was defeated--which necessitated eliminating several programs such as driver ed., summer recreation.

"2. Radon - We were served with information that we had a radon problem that needed to be corrected--this took effort and money.

"3. Asbestos - Asbestos removal and treatment has been an ongoing problem--we have spent millions, and a large amount is required.

"4. High School Fire - We had a fire at the high school allegedly started by one or more of our students. This was a difficult time--in terms of the physical plant--and if it were not for the rapid response by the Nutley Fire Department--our school may have had more extensive damage.

"5. High School Roof - Leakage, prohibition by authorities about the use of certain sections of the building; safety factor; cost for repair--and important message to the community that the Board of Education is required by law to provide the buildings to serve the educational needs of our students.

"4. Challenges:

"1. The Board of Education, through its Superintendent, central office, administrators, teachers and staff, has the challenge of providing a top quality education for 3347 students; 2 in State facilities, 40 in private school placements; 2 to regular programs in other districts, 21 in special education programs in other districts and 7 students received. That is 3419. These are not numbers, they are students for whom we have a legal responsibility for their education. In my judgment, there is no more social responsibility in our community than the education of these students.

"2. I have been on the Board close to 10 years, and the person who has the great concern for their education is our professional leader and Superintendent, Dr. Fadule. I sleep pretty well each night; but I can assure you that is not the same for Dr. Fadule because there is always something to worry about. We are always on pins and needles.

"3. A commentary - isn't it interesting that the only budget that citizens vote on is one that deals with children.

"Isn't it interesting that the explanation for the rise in the municipal budget is the big increase in garbage costs. We as citizens tend to accept this, and it matters not that within the last 4 or 5 years the cost of hauling garbage has increased from less than \$20 a ton to over \$130 per ton. Isn't it interesting that the same increased costs of insurance coverage effects the school district as the municipal budget, but citizens only vote on the school budget because it is for children.

"What a challenge as we try to provide top quality education.

"4. One doesn't need to be so terribly bright to know that schools are only as good as the teachers and administrators and the staff. We expect much from them, and in our society this requires money. But we have done almost a super effort in terms of the cost per student in our district. You have heard this.

"5. Satisfaction:

"1. The purpose of our school system is to foster the growth and development and learning and skills and confidence and self esteem and productivity of our students. Are we perfect? The answer is no. Are we good? The answer is that, with all types of external as well as internal measures, we are excellent.

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"2. In my brief specific contact with about thirty students from elementary and middle school and high school in my two forums, I have been tremendously impressed with our students. They, along with a vast number, I am extremely confident, will succeed in their future in the remaining part of the school, college, university and professional schools as well as their future endeavors.

"6. Conclusion: - I came on the Board of Education because I feel that I might contribute a little, because as a parent and citizen, the Nutley Public Schools have served my five children in a highly satisfactory way.

"What is this all about tonight? It is to communicate to you that there is a very serious challenge to our school district during this school referendum. The very quality of our schools will suffer if we do not provide the support for our education system.

"We need your continued good will, support and positive vote. It is for our students."

Mr. Rusignuolo complimented the administrators and Dr. Baratta on their very fine presentations. He stated that in the event of a budget defeat, the following are potential areas for cuts:

Increased class sizes

Reductions and postponements in the purchases of textbook and instructional supplies

The purchase of computers and other high technology items for instructional purposes would have to be eliminated or curtailed

Field trips

The elimination of the current school district cafeteria program

The elementary Summer Enrichment Program

The High School - Franklin School Summer School

The elimination of the high school summer band camp program must be considered

Elimination of the free use of musical instruments

Mr. Rusignuolo added that following last year's budget defeat, behind-the-wheel driver education and the open gym program had been cut. He strongly urged everyone to support the budget.

ADOPTING BUDGET FOR THE 1990/1991 SCHOOL YEAR:

Mrs. Scheckel presented and moved the adoption of the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Rusignuolo. On a roll call vote the resolution was unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the Township of Nutley adopted a tentative budget for the 1990/1991 school year on March 21, 1990, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to P.L. 1990, c. 2, said tentative budget was posted in each school by March 28, 1990, and

WHEREAS, said tentative budget was properly advertised on March 29, 1990, and

WHEREAS, the Public Hearing on the budget was conducted on April 2, 1990,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education hereby adopts the official budget for the 1990/1991 school year in the following amounts:

Current Expense	\$23,097,345.00
Debt Service	<u>95,153.75</u>
Total Budget	\$23,192,498.75, of which

the following amount shall be raised by local tax levy:

Current Expense	\$19,677,881.00
Debt Service	<u>89,593.75</u>
Total	\$19,767,474.75

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Secretary be authorized to place on the ballot at the Annual School Election to be held on April 24, 1990, the proposal to approve the Current Expense tax levy portion of the 1990/1991 school budget. (The complete budget for 1990/1991 is attached as Appendix 1.)

SCHOOL ELECTION:

Mrs. Scheckel presented and moved the adoption of the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Battaglia. On a roll call vote the resolution was unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, the Annual School Election shall take place on April 24, 1990, and

WHEREAS, at said election the legal voters of the school district will elect three members to the Board of Education for a term of three years, and

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WHEREAS, the legal voters of the school district will vote on the proposed tax levy for Current Expense for the 1990/1991 school year in the amount of \$19,677,881, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the resolution approved by the Board on March 26, 1990, the legal voters of the school district will vote on a proposal authorizing the Board of Education to undertake various capital projects within the school district including (1) asbestos abatement activities and related work, (2) removal of existing fuel oil storage tanks, (3) the making of necessary modifications to heating plants and (4) the replacing of the roof above the auditorium and main gymnasium at Nutley High School and to expend an amount not to exceed \$1,985,000, and to issue bonds in the principal amount not exceeding \$1,985,000.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Board of Education is hereby directed to post notices on each schoolhouse in the district and the following named public places: Township Hall, The Nutley Sun Office, Gary's Pharmacy, Little's Pharmacy, Fred's Party Shop and Griffith Shade Shop, no later than April 12, 1990, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the boundaries of the sections of the school district, the voters of which shall be entitled to vote at the respective polling places, be as herein designated:

Polling District No. 1  
Lincoln School  
Ward 1 - Districts 1, 2 & 7

Polling District No. 4  
Yantacaw School  
Ward 2 - Districts 1, 5 & 6

Polling District No. 2  
Radcliffe School  
Ward 1 - Districts 4 & 6  
Ward 2 - District 2

Polling District No. 5  
Yantacaw School  
Ward 3 - Districts 3, 4 & 5

Polling District No. 3  
Franklin School  
Ward 1 - Districts 3 & 5

Polling District No. 6  
Washington School  
Ward 3 - Districts 1, 2, 6 & 7

Polling District No. 7  
Spring Garden School  
Ward 2 - Districts 3 & 4

and


BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, That the polls be open between the hours of 2:30 and 9:00 p.m.

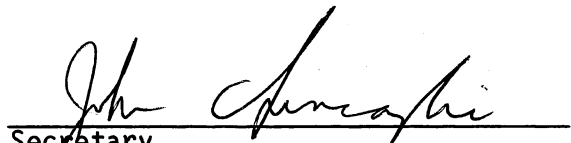
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ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion made by Mr. Battaglia, seconded by Mrs. Scheckel, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

  
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President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

4/18/90  
Date

April 2, 1990