

NUTLEY BOARD OF EDUCATION

**SPECIAL MEETING
JANUARY 7, 2003**

The Nutley Board of Education held a Special Meeting on Tuesday, January 7, 2003 at the Radcliffe School Multi-Purpose Room, 379 Bloomfield Avenue, Nutley, NJ 07110.

President Cafone opened the meeting at 7:35 PM

**CALL TO
ORDER**

MEETING NOTICE

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NOTICE**

President Cafone stated that in compliance with Chapter 231, Public Law 1975 entitled Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this meeting had been provided as specified in the Act. Proper notice of this Special Meeting was legally advertised in The Nutley Sun on January 2, 2003. Said notice was also posted at the entrance of the Board of Education offices, mailed to The North Jersey Herald & News, The Star Ledger, and The Nutley Journal and mailed to the Nutley Township Clerk. The purpose of this meeting will be for the Board to discuss the school district proposed bond referendum. It is anticipated that no action will be taken at this meeting.

This is an official meeting.

FLAG SALUTE

**FLAG
SALUTE**

President Cafone led the assembly in the flag salute.

ROLL CALL

**ROLL
CALL**

Present: Mrs. Maria Alamo
Dr. Philip T. Casale
Mr. Gerard Del Tufo
Mr. Alan Genitempo
Mr. Sal Olivo
Dr. Gerard M. Parisi
Mr. Joseph C. Pelaia
Mr. Alfred R. Restaino, Jr.
Mr. John Cafone

Also Present: Dr. Kathleen C. Serafino, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. James Mallen, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Dr. James Vivinetto, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Jonathan Orr, Student Representative, NHS
Mr. Lee Heckendorn, Board Architect

HEARING OF CITIZENS (Agenda Items Only)

**HEARING OF
CITIZENS**

Resident Tony Fedell questioned the rate of the average homeowner tax increase for the \$58 million dollar bond referendum in Bloomfield versus the proposed \$47 million dollar bond referendum here in Nutley.

Resident Barbara Davide suggested that the Board set aside a specific amount of money per year in a separate interest-bearing account and dedicate it solely for improvements to school buildings.

Resident Julie Viola asked what the consensus was among the Board members for going out for another referendum.

Resident Greg Palmer said he was on the Shady Tree Advisory Committee and is opposed to the underground cafeteria at the Franklin School which would require the removal of stately trees on the front lawn.

Resident Ken Reilly commended the Board for its integrity and expressed regret that anyone would question the Board's integrity. He suggested that the Board again seek voter approval and expressed his belief that the bond referendum would pass in the next election.

Resident Tony Iannarone suggested that the Board enlist a citizen's committee to review and hopefully support the Board's decisions. He further suggested that the Board should not reduce the amount of the bond referendum. Instead he recommended that the Board break up the referendum into four questions.

Resident Carmen Alessio spoke in support of the referendum and thanked the Board for its efforts on behalf of the children. He urged the Board to continue to pursue improvements to the Nutley schools.

Resident Maria Cifelli said she had a problem with her taxes being raised every year and no improvements being made to the school buildings.

Resident Jim Viola a professional chemist graduated from Nutley High School and expressed an understanding that the outdated labs absolutely need to be upgraded.

Resident Jeannine Nichols spoke about the overcrowded conditions throughout the district and her willingness to pay whatever tax increase is required to provide the recommended improvements.

Resident Gabriele Miller a parent of a Radcliffe student spoke of the lack of handicapped access and overcrowding.

President Cafone, Superintendent Serafino and Board Secretary Mallen and architect Lee Heckendorn responded

where appropriate. At 8:25 PM hearing no further comments, President Cafone closed this portion of the meeting.

BOARD DISCUSSION

**BOARD
DISCUSSION**

President Cafone opened the meeting to comments from the trustees. He announced that he and a committee of Board of Education Trustees met this evening with the Nutley Township Commissioners. He provided each of the commissioners with detailed drawings and explanations of all of the bond referendum projects.

Trustee Del Tufo asked about colleges giving credit to our high school students for AP courses.

Trustee Casale clarified his suggestion regarding waivers for certain referendum projects.

Trustee Pelaia asked about the enrollment study by Whitehall Associates and requested he receive a copy of this study.

Trustee Restaino spoke positively of the meeting with the Nutley Township Commissioners and commended President Cafone for his successful efforts to meet tonight with the Commissioners.

Trustee Pelaia expressed appreciation that tonight's Special Meeting is being videotaped for broadcast on cable TV Channel 72.

Trustee Del Tufo thanked the resident who recommended the board put four questions on the next referendum. However, he expressed doubt that the four questions are the best route to pursue.

Trustee Alamo commended Superintendent Serafino for her February 22, 2002 letter addressed to the Friends of Nutley Schools and suggested it be sent again and posted on the school website.

Trustee Restaino stated that he felt the failure of the referendum had nothing to do with the integrity of the Board or the way the plan was presented. He said it had to do with dollars and cents.

Trustee Casale said the Board needs to seriously consider the proposal it believed was sound and also reach out to the 2,500 people who voted no. He said the Board should accept State Senator Garry Furnari's offer to meet with state officials in an attempt to increase the amount of aid from the state for these projects.

Trustee Genitempo spoke of the state tax rebate program available to senior citizens which would exempt qualified senior

citizens from the tax increase generated by the passage of the bond referendum.

Trustee Parisi spoke of ill-founded rumors which were spread by certain residents who were opposed to the passing of the referendum.

Extensive discussion ensued.

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM on a motion by Trustee Pelaia, seconded by Trustee Casale and unanimously approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES MALLEN
Board Secretary