

MOUNTAIN LAKES BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
Wednesday, December 8, 2010

A Special Joint Meeting of the Mountain Lakes Borough Board of Education was held on Wednesday, December 8, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. at the Mountain Lakes High School.

Daniel Borgo
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Roll Call:

Present: Mrs. Barkauskas
Mrs. Burch
Mrs. Feigeles
Mr. Gniewek
Mr. Moreau
Mr. Munday
Mrs. Wall
Mr. Benvolato, Boonton Township Representative (7:45)

Absent: Mrs. Mitchell
Mrs. Shepell

Also present: Dr. Kazmark, Superintendent, Dr. Humphrey, Superintendent of Schools; Boonton Township; Robin Kalfus, President, Boonton Township Board of Education; members of the Boonton Township Board of Education and approximately 40 members of the public

STATEMENT OF NOTICE

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Mountain Lakes Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the Mountain Lakes Municipal Building and sent to the following newspaper: the Citizen and the Morris County Daily Record.

DISCUSSION — SHARED SERVICES

Mr. Gniewek welcomed the members of the public to a joint meeting of the Mountain Lakes Board of Education and the Boonton Township Board of Education and advised that the purpose of the meeting is discussion of shared services between the two districts. He introduced Robin

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Kalfus, President of the Boonton Township Board of Education and Dr. Roseann Humphrey, Boonton Township Superintendent.

Mr. Gniewek advised that in view of the impending retirement of both Superintendents the two Boards have looked into the possibility of sharing a superintendent and discussed the possible cost savings. This was also discussed with New Jersey School Boards representatives and with the Executive County Superintendent. After thorough examination of all the aspects of a shared superintendent it was determined that there would not be any benefit to either district particularly in view of the Boonton Township Superintendent also acting as Principal and the salary caps imposed on superintendent salaries. A more practical solution would be to share services at the mid and lower level. A merger of the two districts was also looked at but it was determined that it would not work economically and it would be difficult to have a merger approved by a majority of voters in both districts.

Dr. Kazmark and and Dr. Humphrey discussed the shared services currently being used by the districts with regard to research data subscriptions, textbook purchases, Child Study teams, shared supervisor services, Teacher Institute and other professional development programs, shared use of facilities such as fields and the high school auditorium, Municipal Alliance programs and the internet safety program with the Boonton Township Police Department.

Dr. Kazmark also noted that the Mountain Lakes Superintendent is basically the superintendent for two separate entities, Mountain Lakes and Lake Drive.

COMMENTS AND REQUESTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Members of the public, including Andy Warren, Mike Feigeles, George Jackson, Charles Gormally, Andrew Parfetto, Michelle Rankin, Sam Carruthers, Marta Pascarella and Ken Stokes, raised questions, commented and expressed opinions on the issues. Discussion took place among the members of the public and the members of the Board and the following points were made:

- Both Boards should look at all levels possible for additional savings such as sharing health plans, administrative services and library services. Need to look outside the box for additional ways to save.
- It is difficult to run a school district when the economy is good and it is not going to get better any time soon. Boards should share services but also need to get together with the leadership of both towns to figure out how to do more with less. Losing teachers each year and increasing class size is not good for the district.
- The Boards should go back and look at all the non-teaching staff and see if anything can be eliminated and coordinated from the business administration standpoint. Outsourcing should also be looked into.

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- Focus should be on shared services rather than merging districts.
- The issues were discussed by each of the Boards, and input was obtained from NJ School Boards and from the County Superintendent's office and it became obvious very quickly that there would be no savings realized by having one superintendent rather than two. The County office encouraged the Boards to look at other levels for sharing services.
- It was suggested that the Boards set up a long term project to consider ways to collaborate to deliver services at a lower cost and possibly change the way the school districts are set up in order to achieve some real consolidation and delivery of education.
- There is talk of a bill being proposed to eliminate K-8 districts. If the two districts combine now we would be ahead of the game.
- The Boonton Township principal would be able to focus more on the Boonton Township school if the superintendent positions were combined. This is a very important decision that should not hinge on the additional cost of \$26,000 to Boonton Township of a shared superintendent.
- The two districts will be negotiating their contract again in two years and one Superintendent would not be able to represent either Board.
- It is not excessive for one superintendent to supervise 5 schools. Can the Boards agree to try to reach agreement on the new contract now?
- It was suggested that the people in Boonton Township would support having a full time principal and a shared superintendent.
- If the upcoming negotiation of the sending/receiving contract is driving the decision not to share a superintendent the Boards should look at the sending/receiving contract now.
- There are a lot of complex questions involved with merging the districts.
- Both Boards need to continue to work together and encourage transparency and improved understanding in both communities.
- The members of both Boards and the administrators were commended for taking the time to give this presentation to the public.

Mr. Gniewek and Ms. Kalfus thanked the community members for coming and sharing their input.

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ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Munday, seconded by Mrs. Feigeles, that meeting be adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Motion carried 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Borgo
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Regina Giardina, Stenographer

Meetings of the Mountain Lakes Board of Education

<u>Date</u>	<u>Type of Meeting</u>	<u>Place</u>
January 3, 2011	Regular	Mountain Lakes High School (7:30 p.m.)
January 6, 2011 (Thursday)	Special (Exec. Session)	Mountain Lakes High School (7:30 p.m.)
January 18, 2011 (Tuesday)	Regular	Mountain Lakes High School (7:30 p.m.)