

**ALPHA BOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD OF
EDUCATION**

**Regular Meeting Minutes – March 16, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Approved April 6, 2021**

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

CALL TO ORDER:

President, Jennifer Pettinelli called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and asked everyone to please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a subsequent moment of silence.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT:

Jennifer Pettinelli read the following statement:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is either discussed or acted upon. The Board has fully complied with the notice requirements by advertising in The Express Times and The Star-Ledger posting publicly and by notifying the Municipal Clerk of the date, time and place of the meeting.

ROLL CALL

Present

President, Jennifer Pettinelli
Vice-President, Patrick Smith
Travis Conway
Christopher McGee

Absent

Loretta Reed

Others Present

Seth Cohen, Chief School Administrator
Tim Mantz, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Robert Merryman, Board Attorney

Flag Salute – Pledge of Allegiance

Silent Meditation

President Jennifer Pettinelli read the District Mission Statement:

The mission of the Alpha Public School is to provide every student with the opportunity to receive a high quality education, in a small, personal, caring, safe and positive environment in which all students at all grade levels achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. In partnership with the parents and the community, a competent and dedicated staff guides students to develop confidence and become productive and contributing members of a constantly changing society.

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II. PRESENTATION

Travis Conway attended the recent Warren County School Boards Association meeting and reviewed what was discussed.

III. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Christopher McGee, to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2021 regular meeting.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Travis Conway, to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2021 executive session.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Christopher McGee, to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2021 work session.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD

None

V. OLD BUSINESS

None

VI. MONTHLY REPORTS OF BOARD SECRETARY AND TREASURER

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Travis Conway, to approve, on the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, the acceptance of the monthly financial reports of the Board Secretary and the Treasurer for the month of **February 2021** and further that, in compliance with NJAC 6A:23A-16.10(c)4, the Board of Education certifies that as of **February 28, 2021**, after review of the secretary's monthly financial report and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of our knowledge, no major account has been over expended in violation of NJAC 6A:23A-16.10(a)1 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

VII. APPROVAL OF TRANSFERS/LIST OF BILLS

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Christopher McGee, to approve the February 17, 2021 through March 16, 2021 current expense bill list for check numbers 19664 to 19698 totaling \$517,614.75.

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Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

VIII. PUBLIC INPUT

None

IX. CHIEF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Cohen told the Board that he met with the 8th grade parents who would prefer to have a promotion ceremony at the school. Any corresponding social event would be held off campus.

Mr. Cohen provided a COVID update. Studies have suggested that 3' of social distancing is adequate rather than 6'. The Board discussed and decided to stay with 6' until the NJ DOE and/or NJ DOH makes an official recommendation.

Mr. Cohen stated that the fire alarm system is currently operable but will not communicate with appropriate entities outside of the school should a fire occur. As a result, the fire marshal will not pass the alarm requiring the school to have a 24/7 fire watch. As the County office agreed that this is an emergent project, the school can act immediately in order to have the work done. Administration is working with vendors for pricing and hopes to award a contract at the next meeting.

ACTION ITEMS: Chief School Administrator's Recommendations

CONSENT AGENDA: Matters listed within the consent agenda have been referred to members of the Board of Education and/or its standing committees, for reading and study, are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion.

Consent Agenda Motion: BUSINESS AFFAIRS

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Christopher McGee, to approve the following business affairs agenda item **2.1**.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

2.1 To adopt the following resolution to approve the tentative 2021-22 school district budget:

BE IT RESOLVED that the tentative budget be approved for the 2021-2022 School Year using the 2021-2022 state aid figures and the Secretary to the Board of Education be authorized to submit the following tentative budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline:

	Budget	Local Tax Levy
General Fund	\$6,279,932	\$3,885,988
Special Revenue Fund	122,419	
Total Base Budget	\$6,402,351	\$3,885,988

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a public hearing be held on May 4, 2021 at the Alpha School for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2021-2022 School Year.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alpha Board of Education includes in the proposed budget the adjustment for the use of banked cap in the amount of \$200,000. The additional funds are included in the base budget and will be used for required building maintenance. The said need will be completed by the end of the 2021-22 budget year and will not be deferred or incrementally completed over a longer period of time.

WHEREAS, the Alpha Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.1 et seq. requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

WHEREAS, a Board of Education may establish, for regular district business travel only, an annual school year threshold of \$1,500 per staff member where prior Board approval shall not be required unless this annual threshold for a staff member is exceeded in a given school year (July 1 through June 30); and

WHEREAS, travel and related expenses not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.1 et seq., but deemed by the Board of Education to be necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves all travel not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.1 et seq. as being necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.2(b), to a maximum expenditure of \$15,000 for all staff and board members.

Consent Agenda Motion: PERSONNEL AFFAIRS

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Travis Conway, to approve the following personnel affairs agenda item **3.1**.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

3.1 To approve Eugene Boyle to provide fire watch services, as needed, beginning on March 14th at an hourly rate of \$14.50.

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Consent Agenda Motion: SCHOOL AFFAIRS

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Christopher McGee, to approve the following school affairs agenda item **4.1**.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

4.1 To approve Kelsey Vanhorn to participate in the WRS Advanced Strategies for Group Instruction workshop from 6/2/21 to 6/4/21 at a registration cost of \$673.31.

X. NEW BUSINESS

None

XI. PUBLIC INPUT

None

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Christopher McGee, to adopt the following resolution to enter into executive session at 7:28 p.m. This executive session is expected to last about 20 minutes. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is Personnel, Negotiations, Student Issues, and/or Legal Matters.

It is anticipated that action pursuant to this executive session will not be taken.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Alpha Borough Board of Education, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of and action upon the specified subject matter.
2. It is anticipated at this time that the above stated subject matter will be made public upon resolution of all information discussed.
3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

XIII. RECONVENE

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Christopher McGee, to reconvene the meeting to public session at 7:42 p.m.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote

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XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m. on a motion by Christopher McGee, seconded by Travis Conway.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Mantz
Business Administrator/ Board Secretary