

**East Granby Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes for
March 18, 2019**

Board Members Present:

Mr. Bob Paskiewicz
Mrs. Sharon Shepherd
Mrs. Karey Pond
Mr. Bob Ravens-Seger
Mr. James Feeney
Mr. John Ziobro
Mrs. Lucia Ziobro

Others Present:

Dr. Patricia Charles, Interim Superintendent
Melissa Bavaro, EGMS Principal
Jennifer Kovaleski, Visitor
Paul Calebaugh, Visitor

Board Members Absent:

Mr. John Welsh
Mr. Robert Crocker

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

A Special Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Bob Paskiewicz with the Pledge of Allegiance recited by all Board members attending and Dr. Patricia Charles, Interim Superintendent.

Secretary Lucia Ziobro questioned why the meeting was “special” noting that only the Monday date chosen March 18, was not the regular Monday the Board of Education meets, so that public comment should have been reflected on the agenda and the meeting should have been held at the regular town hall location and televised. To that end, Chair Bob Paskiewicz allowed public comment from the persons attending the meeting in the Board of Education conference room. Jennifer Kovaleski, a parent from EG, questioned the timing of the proposal to appoint Melissa Bavaro-Grande from middle school principal to acting superintendent. Jennifer Kovaleski’s concern was that Melissa would be doing the two jobs at the same time. Chair Bob Paskiewicz explained that Dr. Charles would be leaving before the end of the school year on May 10 and the need to help transition from Dr. Charles to a search for either an interim superintendent or a 3 year superintendent. EG resident Paul Calebaugh asked whether the Board would take the opportunity now to partner with Suffield or another community. Chair Paskiewicz stated that the Board had not abandoned anything and was looking at further data to determine the next best course of action.

II. Executive Session – Personnel – Discussion of the Appointment and Employment of Melissa Bavaro-Grande as Acting Superintendent

(Executive Session, if required, is held in accordance with P.A. 75-342)

MOTION: A motion was made by Vice Chair Sharon Shepherd to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the need for an acting superintendent and the hiring of Melissa Bavaro-Grande as Acting Superintendent. The motion was seconded by Bob Ravens-Seger. ***Motion approved unanimously.*** The visitors left the conference room. The executive session was called to order at 6:08 p.m.

MOTION: A motion was made by Jim Feeney and seconded by Karey Pond to adjourn the executive session at 6:35 p.m. **Motion approved unanimously.** The Board returned to the special meeting at 6:37 p.m. and the visitors returned.

III. Budget 2019-2020

In the special meeting, the 2019-2020 budget was discussed. John Ziobro questioned why the budget was not focused on cutting administration or overhead. As an example, he questioned the number of secretaries employed at the schools, referencing a 2015 chart. Sharon Shepherd states positions should not be cut just because there are a lot; the Board needs to know what the duties are of each position. John states the superintendent is in the role to know what the duties are and should make the cuts. Dr. Charles states administrators are requesting more secretaries. Jim Feeney says CABA did a 2015 study and did not cut anyone. Chair Paskiewicz says there is frustration among the Board members where to cut, but administrators wear a lot of different hats. John Ziobro's point is to cut a position instead of student programs like ACC2. John Ziobro pointed out there are 4 teaching positions that can be cut due to a reduction in enrollment that keeps within Board policy guidelines. Sharon Shepherd says one position is for kindergarten and enrollment is always unknown. John Ziobro asks why the transportation surplus as shown by the numbers each year has not been considered; it is projected at \$182,295 available this year. Dr. Charles states special education is the answer to increased transportation costs and the increases in the new M and J bus contract over Rainbow. Lucia Ziobro wants to know why the adjustment was never made by the Board of Education to the 4.41% budget prepared by the superintendent for the March 14 Board of Finance meeting, when full discussion took place at the Board of Education March 11 regular meeting stating that the superintendent and Sherry Holmes would make all the adjustments the Board had openly discussed at the meeting to get to a 3.1 % budget. The board members were quick to point out that was not voted on and that the Board of Finance will instruct the Board of Education on April 2 regarding what it wants for a budget. Recommendation made by Bob Ravens-Seger to endorse the 4.41% budget as presented by the superintendent.

IV. Recommended Actions

a. Appointment of Acting Superintendent

Chair Bob Paskiewicz next called for a vote on the appointment of an Acting Superintendent. Lucia Ziobro asked for a brief written statement to be made part of the record. The statement is:

“I strongly object to any appointment of an “acting” superintendent, rather than employing a certified interim superintendent.

The children of East Granby deserve an experienced, fully qualified superintendent of schools, not someone who has to learn through trial and error at the expense of the students.

Now there is sufficient time to conduct a search for another interim superintendent who is state certified and offer a limited contract for the interim period to bridge the gap until the State decides the future of East Granby's educational system, or to secure a shared superintendent with another district of East Granby's choosing.

As a board, we spent considerable time and money to discontinue the employment of the prior superintendent, and we should not act hastily to hire

someone so closely aligned with the prior administration. The prime example of this is the school budget presented to the Board of Finance last week, where the focus was on reductions to student programs rather than overhead. The focus should be on choices that have the least impact on students.

We have the opportunity now to start fresh, not maintain the status quo. We should take advantage of the opportunity presented to employ a qualified interim or shared superintendent to provide fresh insights and fresh ideas to best operate the district and serve the students of East Granby.”

Chair Bob Paskiewicz responded that there will be an open process for a public community forum on the superintendent issue and a search committee will be made available. He wants to finish this “in a good way.” He states the majority has full faith in Melissa Bavaro-Grande to maintain the district and “ride out” the rest of the year and asking her to do that is a great responsibility. Karey Pond states Melissa Bavaro-Grande is well respected by parents, kids, and administration, has been in the district a long time and that she would be a “stabilizing force.” Bob Ravens-Seger states Dr. Charles came from outside the district and that Dr. Charles came up with the recommendation for Melissa Bavaro-Grande, so ‘it’s not an inside job” and provides continuity.

MOTION: Vice Chair Sharon Shepherd made the motion to appoint Melissa Bavaro-Grande Acting Superintendent, seconded by Bob Ravens-Seger. FOR: Sharon Shepherd, Bob Ravens-Seger, Jim Feeney, Karey Pond, Bob Paskiewicz. AGAINST: John Ziobro, Lucia Ziobro. *Motion approved.*

b. Adopt the BOE Budget for 2019-2020

MOTION: Jim Feeney made the motion to endorse the 4.41% budget and Bob Ravens-Seger seconded. FOR: Bob Paskiewicz, Sharon Shepherd, Karey Pond, Jim Feeney, Bob Ravens-Seger. AGAINST: John Ziobro, Lucia Ziobro. *Motion approved.*

V. Adjournment

MOTION: A motion was made by Bob Ravens-Seger to adjourn the special meeting. Karey Pond seconded the motion. *Motion approved unanimously.* The Special Meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lucia Ziobro
Board Secretary

These minutes are issued pending Board of Education approval.