

**BOROUGH OF MOUNT ARLINGTON  
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 12, 2008  
7:00 p.m.**

**1. Call to Order**

2. Adequate notice of this meeting of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was published in the Roxbury Register on Thursday, May 8, 2008 and the Daily Record on Thursday, May 1, 2008; notice was posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building on April 29, 2008 and has been available to the public; notice of this meeting is on file in the office of the Borough Clerk.

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-1 et seq.). The Borough Council opens every public meeting for comments of the public. However, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 : “Nothing in this Act shall be construed to limit the discretion of a public body to permit, prohibit or regulate the active participation at any meeting.....”

Speakers at Borough meetings shall have five minutes to present their comments to the Borough Council so as not to consume time that would otherwise be allotted to other persons who wish to speak.. Speakers shall be courteous to the Council and other persons attending the meeting. Offensive remarks or unruly behavior will not be allowed and anyone who violates this policy will be barred from participating in the meeting.

\*\*Tom Cryan, President of the Board of Education, called the Board of Education Special Meeting To Order.

**3. Flag Salute**

**4. Roll Call**

Councilman Sorge, Councilwoman Galate Goodman, Councilwoman Mulligan, Councilwoman Cerasoli, Councilman Doran, Council President Driscoll. JoAnne Sendler, Borough Administrator, and Mitchell Jacobs, Borough Attorney, were also present. Mayor Ondish was not present.

\*\*Tom Cryan, Board of Education President, called the roll.

Roll Call: Hughes, Paradiso, Stone, D’Abbraccio. Also present were Jane Jameson, Superintendent, and Ralph Radisch, Business Administrator/Board Secretary. Dr. Kathleen Serafino, Interim County Superintendent of Schools, and John Sincaglia, Acting Morris County School Business Administrator, were present as well.

\*\*Tom Cryan, President of the Board of Education, Made a Motion to Waive the Closed Session of the Members of the Board of Education. Motion Approved by all Members.

Councilwoman Mulligan made a Motion to Move the Public Session to Follow the Discussion as Listed on the Agenda.

Second: Councilwoman Cerasoli.  
All in Favor – Aye, None Opposed.  
Motion Approved.

**6. Discussion**

Board of Education Budget:

Council President Driscoll opened the discussion by stating that since the school budget failed, the responsibility falls upon Council to trim the budget a little to make the taxpayers happy. Discussions between the Council and Board of Education included:

- capital projects such as the heating system upgrade, window replacement and major building upgrade.

- full time kindergarten, a new kindergarten teacher and child care specialist.
- Council's major concern was if the capital projects were mandatory or recommended, and which fall into a health and safety category.
- Council stressed that it would be ideal to achieve what we have to achieve without taking anything away; their primary focus is on the capital expense projects.
- Discussed school pension liability, health benefits.
- Discussed capital expense to move two people out of the municipal building to the school building.
- Discussed cost of students attending Roxbury High School and the cost of charter schools.

## 5. Open to Public

Steve Lardiere, 45 Kadel Drive:

- Mr. Lardiere asked the process of the Council's recommendations for the defeated budget. Council President Driscoll stated that the Council can make recommendations and suggest reducing line items but the Board is not compelled to follow our suggestions; the Board can opt to change the actual line item, but not the dollar amount.

Susan Longo, 19 Primrose Lane:

- Ms. Longo is a teacher in Mount Arlington School and stated that if the Board cannot guarantee the non-tenured staff positions as of May 15<sup>th</sup>, those employees have to be let go; we cannot run the school without half-staff and she asked that Council not take too much time with their decision.

Frank Hughes, 436 Howard Boulevard:

- Mr. Hughes asked if the windows would be put in the area covered by the new boiler and that the two projects should go hand in hand; we can't improve the heating system if the windows are drafty.

Charles Squires, 26 Birch Terrace:

- Mr. Squires stated that he had never heard anything about losing teachers. Mr. Squires also objected to the full day kindergarten and hiring another teacher for \$60,000. Mr. Squires suggested eliminating replacing the windows this year and questioned the cost of charter schools per student. Mr. Squires continued to question other line items and stated that Mount Arlington is the the only municipality in the County that has a Dean of Students.

Rachel Byrne, 95 North Bertrand Road:

- Ms. Byrne agreed with many of Council's comments but urged Council to keep the full day kindergarten proposal. Ms. Byrne stated that with regard to the capital improvements, we must do improvements when they come up, even if it is 3 years in a row, and preventative maintenance as well. Ms. Byrne also stated that Council did not have to cut any of the budget and could pass it as is.

Gerry Curtin, 133 Orben Drive:

- Mr. Curtin stated that boilers usually require preventative maintenance and a good inspection team can tell the life of the boiler, the components that are going to fail and how they are going to fail. Mr. Curtin stated that with regard to kindergarten, parental help is crucial. Mr. Curtin stated that the Council is not in a good situation to be handed this dilemma but we all know these are hard times; the voters have spoken and the school has to tighten up as well.

Councilman Doran spoke about line items regarding cleaning, care and maintenance services and other property services and noted that there is a significant increase from the 2007-2008 revised appropriations. Council President Driscoll asked about the staffing, particularly the child study team. Jane Jameson explained the that one employee will be leaving but they will be switching staff, not hiring someone new. Council President Driscoll stated that he did not see any deduction then in the staffing line; Ms. Jameson will look into that further. Councilman Doran asked about the comparative spending guide given out by the state and noted Mount Arlington has a ranking of 34 in the pupil ranking.

Steve Lardiere, 45 Kadel Drive:

- Mr. Lardiere asked that the capital expenditures fall under health and safety and questioned the State requirements regarding temperature in a school building. Mr. Lardiere asked what would happen if a child or teacher became overheated, could not get out in time and suffers some type of attack due to the heat.

Ms. Jameson stated that they are moving a teacher from a contracted service into our general teachers line, reducing the cost of special services.

Councilman Doran stated that there was an attempt to meet with the Board of Education and Superintendent sooner but that was apparently not possible; Council had only three weeks to review this budget and consider this very difficult situation.

Councilwoman Mulligan Requested a Closed Session to Obtain Clarification and Legal Advice.

Second: Councilwoman Cerasoli.

Roll Call: Sorge, Galate Goodman, Mulligan, Cerasoli, Doran, Council President Driscoll.

Motion Approved.

Motion to Return to Open Session: Councilwoman Mulligan.

Second: Councilman Doran.

All in Favor – Aye; None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

Council President Driscoll stated that Council would like to resolve this budget tonight especially due to the fact of the lay-offs, as brought up earlier this evening. Councilman Sorge stated that since Council was mandated by the voters, he suggested to cut the budget by \$400,000. Councilman Doran stated \$75,000 be cut from the building, \$105,000 be cut from the windows, \$17,000 be cut from the charter schools, \$51,000 be cut from the kindergarten, and \$25,000 off the top; Council does not want to risk the boiler. Councilman Doran suggested a \$300,000 reduction in the budget, 3% of \$10,000,000 budget which is a meaningful reduction. Councilwoman Cerasoli agreed with the \$300,000 and stated this is the worst job Council has had to do; we must make drastic cuts in two budgets but this follows the wishes of the taxpayers. Councilwoman Cerasoli stated that the idea of laying off all so many teachers is very upsetting and Council just found out about that tonight. If the Board appeals the Council's decision, the teachers still have to be laid off; the teachers may be able to be hired back, if they are available.

Gene Paradisio, Board of Education member, questioned these cuts. Council indicated that this was a meaningful budget cut and can be done without taking anything away from the children. Councilwoman Galate Goodman proposed \$75,000 cut for the move, \$105,000 cut for the windows and \$17,000 cut for the charter schools.

Motion to Confirm Council's Recommendation in the Reduction of the Tax Levy Amount to \$300,000: Councilman Doran.

Second: Councilman Sorge.

Roll Call: Sorge, Galate Goodman – No, Mulligan, Cerasoli, Doran, Council President Driscoll.

Motion Approved.

Council conferred and listed the specific line items to be specified in the resolution. Councilman Doran stated that the discussion is that the balance of the \$25,000 be arbitrarily assigned to the boiler line item giving the Board the flexibility to grab that wherever they want. The Board of Education has the right to maintain the number recommended by Council but can take the reduction from any line item, just so that it remains within the Council recommendations.

**7. Resolutions**

**2008-94** Resolution of the Borough of Mount Arlington, County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Concerning Setting the Tax Levy for Mount Arlington School District.

Council President Driscoll read the line items and a section of the resolution into the record.

Motion to Approve: Councilman Sorge.

Second: Councilwoman Cerasoli.

Roll Call: Sorge, Galate Goodman – No, Mulligan, Cerasoli, Doran, Council President Driscoll.

Motion Approved.

**8. Adjourn**

Motion to Adjourn: Councilman Doran.

Second: Councilman Sorge.

All in Favor – Aye; None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

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Linda DeSantis, RMC  
Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved, with corrections, at Council Meeting of June 9, 2008.

**AGENDA**  
**MOUNT ARLINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
Monday, May 12, 2008

7:00 P.M.

Mount Arlington Municipal Building  
419 Howard Blvd  
Mount Arlington, New Jersey 07856

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

- A. The Mount Arlington Board of Education is meeting for discussion about business before the Board today.
- B. The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to insure the public's right to have advance notice of and to attend meetings of public bodies at which business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with this Act, the Board of Education has sent notice of today's meetings and copies of it's Agenda to the:

Daily Record  
Roxbury Register  
Star Ledger  
Municipal Clerk  
Board Members

Notice of today's meeting and copies of the Agenda have been posted in the following places:

Mount Arlington School  
Edith M. Decker School

- C. Pledge of Allegiance

2. CLOSED SESSION

- A. Legal
- B. Personnel
- C. Negotiations

3. DISCUSS SCHOOL BUDGET WITH TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

4. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS OF BUSINESS

5. ADJOURN

Action may be taken on any or all of the above and on any other matter that may be brought before the Board.