

Haines Borough
Special Borough Assembly Meeting
JOINT SESSION WITH THE HAINES BOROUGH SCHOOL BOARD
January 31, 2012 – 6:30pm

Approved

MINUTES

- A. Call to Order/Pledge to the Flag:** Mayor **SCOTT** called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Haines Borough High School Commons and led the pledge to the flag.
- B. Assembly Roll Call: Present** – Mayor Stephanie **SCOTT**, and Assembly Members Joanne **WATERMAN**, Steve **VICK**, Debra **SCHNABEL**, and Norm **SMITH**, and Daymond **HOFFMAN** (via teleconference). **Absent** – Assembly Members Jerry **LAPP**.

Borough Staff Present: Mark **EARNEST**/Borough Manager, Jamie **HEINZ**/Deputy Clerk, and Jila **STUART**/Chief Fiscal Officer.

- C. School Board Roll Call: Present** – President Carol **KELLY** and members, Brian **CLAY**, Nelle **JURGELEIT-GREENE**, Ann Marie **PALMIERI**, Sean **CONE**, Sarah **SWINTON**, Brenda **JONES**, and student member Royal **HENDERSON**. **Absent** – None.

School District Staff Present: Michael **BYER**/School Superintendent and Ashley **SAGE**/District Secretary.

Visitors Present: Margaret **FRIEDENAUER**/CVN, Rob **GOLDBERG**, Joe **PARNELL**, Bill **KURZ**, Matt **DAVIS**, Tennie **BENTZ**, Patty **BROWN**, Sara **CHAPPELL**, Pam **LONG**, Michelle **BYER** and others.

- D. Approval of Agenda**

Motion: **WATERMAN** moved to “approve the meeting agenda,” and the motion carried unanimously.

- E. Public Comments** – There were no comments

- F. Business**

1) **District Educational Overview**

During discussion, **BYER** explained the district’s current focus was on what could be expected for next school year regarding teacher hires and renewing contracts. He explained that tenured teacher contracts are due out by 3/15 and non-tenured teacher contracts are due out by the last day of school. He also explained that the district currently has ten non-tenured teachers.

Additionally, **BYER** explained that district administration is currently building the class schedules for next year, which can be a difficult task.

It was asked if the district had given any thought to public preschool education. **BYER** explained that preschool is invaluable and that the district is at the table with talks of a public preschool.

2) **Haines Borough Comprehensive Plan Update**

GOLDBERG explained that the Planning commission has been working on the Comprehensive Plan with contractor, Sheinberg and Associates, and that the document is near 95% complete. He also explained the process for completing and adopting the document.

Additionally, **GOLDBERG** explained that future ideas for borough owned buildings are a goal in this current comprehensive plan. He explained that in the last plan, an educational goal was to build a new school and that currently they are looking at the increasing population and the potential need for additional classroom space.

SCHNABEL asked about the practicality of including the school district’s strategic plan in the comprehensive plan by reference as an important planning document. **GOLDBERG** agreed that input from the school board would be a great addition to the plan.

3) **School Facilities Issues**

- a. Major Maintenance/CIPs

EARNEST explained that generally school districts are responsible for routine ongoing maintenance of the school facility and that the Borough is responsible for major maintenance.

He pointed out that there is a gray area with the definition of major maintenance and suggested some ideas. He said he would continue to look for definitions and guidance from other municipalities. **BYER** added that he and the Borough's Public Facilities Director have a good working relationship and can generally come up with a plan on a case by case basis.

WATERMAN asked for clarification on what form the definition needed to be in. **BYER** suggested the administrations can come up with a recommendation and come to their respective bodies. **SMITH** suggested making a list of maintenance needs and collectively prioritizing them.

SCHNABEL left the meeting during this discussion.

Motion: VICK moved to "direct the administrations of the borough and school to lay out a plan by September 1st for major vs. minor maintenance," and it was amended to read "direct the administrations of the borough and school to lay out a plan by April 1st for major vs. minor maintenance." The motion, as amended, carried unanimously.

The due date for the plan and caps for major maintenance vs. minor maintenance were discussed. Clarification was also given regarding the plan being a document or definition.

EARNEST said that the administrations had great communication with each other and also pointed out that the 1% tax for Capital Improvement Projects were to be borough-wide and implementing projects required diplomacy.

4) **Budget**

BYER explained that the district is facing declining federal revenues and increased costs associated with health plans, salaries and operating expenses, causing shortfalls. He also explained that the current Base Student Allocation is \$5,680 and if the state and borough fund the school district to the same level as FY12, their projections for FY13 show a \$674,177 deficit which would have to be pulled from the fund balance.

PALMIERI pointed out that assumptions used for projections are lower than current and that the negotiated teacher contract didn't include an increase, however, still needs to be negotiated. **VICK** asked the comfort level with using half of the fund balance to balance the budget. **KELLY** said she was very uncomfortable using that much because of the unforeseen emergencies. **VICK** asked if preschool students count toward funding. **BYER** explained that currently they do not.

JONES explained that the school district sent a letter to the governor requesting forward funding and asked the assembly to do the same.

Motion: VICK moved to "direct the manager to create a resolution for the next Assembly meeting for approval supporting SB 171," and it was amended to read "direct the manager to create a resolution for the next Assembly meeting for approval supporting forward funding and increasing the base student allocation." The motion, as amended, carried unanimously.

During discussion, **WATERMAN** asked if it was good to tie the resolution to the actual bill or the topic of the bill. **EARNEST** said he advocates to tie to the subject and not the bill number.

SCOTT explained that borough is anticipating a 10% decrease in funding and has been cautioned to be conservative in its approach. She also explained that the borough's means for generating revenue is taxing and turned the floor to **STUART** who explained the citizen's initiative passing a tax cap of 10mils and the townsite is very close to that cap.

JONES asked if the borough had an estimate of what to expect at this time. It was explained that the manager's budget is presented by 3/30. **CONE** asked if any of the secure rural school money that was not passed through to the school had been set aside. It was explained that what wasn't passed through went into the borough's general fund.

JONES said that she appreciates the challenges and is excited that the borough is currently developing its Comprehensive Plan because revenues can't always be controlled, but spending can and the community is currently prioritizing what is important.

G. Closing Comments

JURGELEIT-GREENE said the school is doing a fantastic job keeping things going and pointed out that they count on the borough to help maintain.

SMITH encouraged a joint meeting with the school district twice a year rather than once a year.

HENDERSON said from a student perspective, he would hope that the borough or state could find a way to maintain funding for education and believes if they can't find the money, they aren't looking hard enough.

JONES agreed with **HENDERSON** and realizes that hard choices going to have to be made and thanked the Assembly for their resolutions.

KELLY echoed **SMITH** and appreciates open lines of communication. She also said that the school board is working to make students all they can be and appreciates the Assembly's support.

CLAY encouraged sending legislators a simple email every day requesting their support.

PALMIERI thanked the assembly for coming, helping define major vs. minor maintenance and their resolution of support.

VICK also likes the thought of meeting with the school board twice a year.

SWINTON wants to keep the school great and wants to make sure the borough and school board work together to keep kids first.

CONE thanked the Assembly for its support as well as the cooperative administrations.

WATERMAN agrees with everyone.

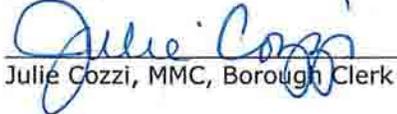
HOFFMAN also agrees with everyone and doesn't want to be redundant.

SCOTT read a proclamation in Gratitude for Educational Leadership by the Haines School Board.

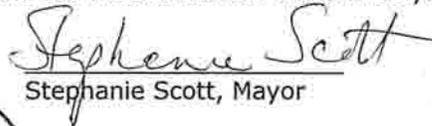
H. Adjournment - 8:13pm

Motion: **WATERMAN** moved to "adjourn the meeting," and the motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:


Julie Cozzi, MMC, Borough Clerk




Stephanie Scott, Mayor

