

**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES INDEX
JUNE 25, 2012
REGULAR SESSION 7:03 P.M.
RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL**

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The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by President McGowan.

I. Salute to Flag

II. Roll Call

PRESENT: Mr. Byrne, Ms. Cwerner, Mr. Koch, Ms. Kusel, Ms. McGowan,
Ms. McKeon, Ms. Shah, Ms. Sherwyn, Ms. Wooldridge

ABSENT: None

III. Regular Session – Call to Order – 7:03 p.m. – Ridge High School Performing Arts Center

IV. Statement of Public Notice

This was a regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Bernards Township. Notice of the time and place of this meeting was provided and copies of that resolution were forwarded to the official newspapers as designated by the Board of Education and to the Township Clerk and a copy of the notice was posted on the bulletin board of the Board of Education Offices in accordance with P.L. 1975 Chapter 231A.

We very much welcome input from the public. There are two times during regular meetings that the public is invited to speak. One time is early in the meeting before the Board votes, and you may speak about any item that is listed on tonight's agenda. Towards the end of the meeting, there is another public forum to address any topic whatsoever.

When you approach the microphone, please state your name and address. We do not have a specific time limit, but we ask that you keep your comments brief. Please understand that our public forums are not structured as question and answer sessions, but rather they are offered as opportunities to share your thoughts with the Board. In instances where the Board feels that there is a misunderstanding or inaccuracy, a member of the Board or Administration will address it in the Board Response portion of the agenda.

There are times when a member of the public makes a comment or asks a question about an employee. New Jersey statute does not permit us to discuss personnel issues in public. Also as a matter of law, a Board of Education may only vote for or against the hiring of an employee upon the recommendation of the superintendent. If the superintendent does not recommend a person, that person's name is not listed on the agenda and there is no vote on that action.

If it is necessary for the Board to go into executive session at the end of the meeting, we will provide an estimated length of time for the session and whether any action is anticipated to be taken upon returning to public session.

V. Ridge High School Traffic Study

Gary Dean, Dolan & Dean Consulting Engineers

Mr. Dean presented his background and reviewed projects he has worked on in Bernards Township including a previous study of the Ridge High School traffic pattern.

In April his company completed traffic volume counts, noted parking lot demands, established the critical peak volume time as between 7:00 – 8:00 a.m., and counted the number of cars dropping-off each morning creating a 'weave' traffic pattern in front of the school.

Mr. Dean stated 22 Ridge High buses utilized Cedar Hill School for their morning drop-off of students. On average, approximately 56 parents utilize Cedar Hill and 70 utilize the municipal complex as drop-off points.

Various short- and long-term solutions were presented. Mr. Dean suggested some low cost solutions that could be implemented by the beginning of the school year including revising the traffic signal timing, striping to designate lane use at the oval, and installation of speed tables along the oval.

Mr. Dean presented other improvement ideas including: removal of the two islands at the South Finley/Ridge High entrance, widening of road to better align the high school entrance with Lake Road, utilization of the municipal complex for morning drop-off, buses dropping-off at the high school and exiting the campus by way of the maintenance road connecting Ridge to Cedar Hill, the PAC entrance as a drop-off site for buses, and allowing vehicles to enter lots C & D via the municipal complex.

Board members asked Mr. Dean specific questions and for clarification of traffic patterns, safety issues in regard to cars and buses integrating in parking lot areas, changes to the health department driveway, probability of buses having enough space to pass when traveling through Lot A, county approval and financial contribution with changes to S. Finley Avenue, and safety concerns with buses and student cars utilizing the PAC driveway at the same time.

click [here](#) to view presentation

VI. Public Forum on Agenda Items

Members of the public thanked the Board of Education and Mr. Dean for providing them with additional information.

Public comments included teacher arrival times, if there were volume changes during different seasons, altering crosswalk patterns at the entrance (if islands were removed), additional car traffic as high school population increases, fewer students taking the bus due to early pickup times, utilizing the municipal complex, consideration to the safety of the children walking in the Homestead Village area, infrastructure in township not keeping up with construction, and focusing on finding a long-term solution to the problem.

VII. Board Forum

Board members commented on crosswalks at entrance, if increases in future population was taken into consideration while preparing the report, impact on gym floor if used as entrance to building, cost of required upgrades to maintenance road in order to accommodate buses, and buses being given drop-off priority over private cars.

Discussion was held on finding a way to encourage student utilization of buses in the morning by making student pick up time a few minutes later, adjusting timing of signal light to create a better traffic flow into the school, having administrative input into discussion, relief of traffic flow problem with buses dropping off at Cedar Hill, and what would be the best all around short-term options.

Consideration will be given to moving the July Board meeting closer to the middle of the month in the event further discussion on this topic is necessary. This topic will be brought back to the Facility Committee.

The following low-cost means were recommended to provide immediate relief and were approved by the Board of Education by a 9-0 show of hands:

- Revise the traffic signal timing to better match existing traffic demands
- Provide striped lanes with lane-use control signing at the “oval”
- Install speed humps/tables along the “oval”
- Investigation of health department driveway in reverse or municipal lot for ingress-only Lots C & D (if above option is implemented, re-route buses to Lot A for drop-off)

VIII. Public Forum on Non Agenda Items

A comment was made regarding maintenance of the proposed speed tables.

IX. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Kusel, seconded by Ms. Cwerner, and approved by all present, the meeting was adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Markarian
Board Secretary