

SOMERDALE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education  
301 Grace Street  
Somerdale, NJ 08083

**Joint Meeting of the Somerdale Borough Council and the Somerdale Board of Education**

**MINUTES**

May 12, 2008  
7:00 p.m.

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 7:06 p.m.

Sunshine Law:

The Somerdale Board of Education Meeting is called to order. The Board of Education is in compliance with the sunshine regulations. This meeting was appropriately advertised by notifying The Record Breeze and The Courier Post, as well as posting notices in Borough Hall, the Somerdale Post Office and the Somerdale Park School.

II. ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

James Abbott-present	Linda Giambri-present
Leslie Caramiello-present	Martha Gray-absent
Richard Caswell-present	Susan Lowden-absent
Cheryl Cronce-present	David Reeder-absent
James Walsh-present	

Also Present:

Dr. Debra L. Bruner, Superintendent  
Kelly Peters, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

III. DISCUSSION of the 2008-'09 Defeated Budget for the Somerdale School District at 7:11 p.m.

*James Abbott, BOE President, Cheryl Cronce, Chairperson, Finance Committee,  
Dr. Debra L. Bruner, Superintendent, and Kelly A. Peters, Business Administrator*

Mayor Passanante stated that he was not thrilled to be meeting tonight but the system requires us to be here.

Mr. Abbott stated that the budget was only defeated by six votes and voters passed a second question by 55% and although that is not enough (as 60% was needed), and less than 1% of the voters in Somerdale voted he feels that a minimal decrease in our budget is acceptable.

The mayor stated that he wished there was a way to solve this problem of not passing votes.

Dr. Bruner stated that the district is looking at what other towns did this year and possibly doing something inter-district.

Mr. Abbott stated that more parental involvement is needed.

The mayor stated that this is legislation on the table right now that would do away with voting on the budgets under cap and making the elections in November to increase voter turnout.

The mayor stated that he and council are not the experts on school finance that they are uncomfortable directing cuts to our budget but the voters spoke and he and council need to recognize this and they a satisfactory resolution to show the tax payers they are paying attention will suffice.

The mayor acknowledged that the district has a tight budget and that it was well prepared.

Mr. Abbott stated that many of the capital projects were for safety reasons and that the board's goal is to make a safe and healthy environment.

Mr. Abbott also stated that our health benefit quotes came in higher than expected.

Mr. Caswell stated that if the Mayor and Council looks over the budget and if they are satisfied they make take no action and re-instate the budget with zero cuts.

The Mayor stated that there are many options on the table.

Mr. Abbott stated he is hopeful that no cuts will be given.

Ms. Peters stated that she wanted to remind everyone that the district did not go to cap last year and that did save the taxpayers and in addition the budget was cut an extra \$40,000 last year. Ms. Peters stated that when she prepared the budget she kept all taxpayers and students into mind.

Mr. Abbott stated that this town is getting all it can get through our school.

Mrs. Caramiello stated that this budget is very well done and there is no room for cuts and suggested Mayor and Council take no money from the budget.

Mr. Walsh stated that he would like Mayor and Council to take into consideration that the voters showed they wanted a new roof and that they might not realize we did not get the ok to spend that additional \$175,000.

Ms. Peters stated that the roof at some point will become a health and safety issue.

Mr. Cronce stated that she wanted to remind Mayor and Council that the district already had to take money from fund balance to cover the tuition of a out of district placement (student) that transferred in after the budget was prepared.

At 7:35 p.m. Mayor and Council moved to Caucus

At 7:45 p.m. Mayor and Council returned

Mayor Passanante stated that there was quite a bit of discussion on this budget and that council has agreed to ask for a cut of \$5,000.00 from the 2008-2009 budget.

IV. RESOLUTION OF 2008-'09 DEFEATED BUDGET on a motion by Mr. Walsh seconded by Mrs. Caramiello at 7:50 p.m.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES 6 NO 0 ABSTAIN 0 ABSENT 3

V. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mrs. Caramiello seconded by Mrs. Giambri the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Kelly A. Peters*

Kelly A. Peters  
Board Secretary