

**TRENTON BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**108 North Clinton Avenue**  
**Trenton, New Jersey 08609**  
**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**Monday – March 6, 2017 – 8:00 a.m.**

**Completed March 6, 2017**  
**Convened at 8:02 A.M.**

**Call to Order**

Board President Gene Bouie called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

President Bouie led the salute to the flag.

**Roll Call**

**Present:**

Gene Bouie  
Addie Daniels-Lane  
D. A. Graham  
Gerald Truehart II  
Jane Rosenbaum – arrived 8:08 a.m.  
Lucy Vandenberg  
Heather Watson

**Absent:**

Fiah Gussin

**Acting Superintendent of Schools** – Nelson Ribon - Present

**Business Administrator/Board Secretary** – Jayne Howard - Present

**New Jersey Sunshine Law** - Read by Board President Bouie

The New Jersey Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right to the public to have advanced notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted on.

On the rules of this act, the Trenton Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting by publicizing the date, time and place, therefore posted in the Central Services Building, 108 North Clinton Avenue, City Clerk's Office, City Hall and the Times. Anyone whose name is on the mailing list should receive a notice.

Formal action will take place at this meeting.

**Mission Statement** - Read by Board President Bouie

All students will graduate with a vision for their future, motivated to learn continually and prepared to succeed in their choice of college of career.

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**Adoption Of Agenda**

Motion was made by Dr. Graham and seconded by Ms. Vandenberg to adopt the agenda. Agenda was adopted by all Board Members present.

<b><u>ROLL CALL</u></b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>
Addie Daniels-Lane	X		
D. A. Graham	X		
Fiah Gussin	absent		
Jane Rosenbaum	not present for vote		
Gerald Truehart	X		
Lucy Vandenberg	X		
Heather Watson	X		
Gene Bouie	X		

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Billie Hayes, Community Member, made the following statement:

I think it's very disrespectful to have this meeting at 8:00 in the morning when parents and community members are putting their kids on the bus. This time is very inconvenient. And this is part of the reason why there's so much opposition between the community and the Board of Education. I do have a prepared speech today that I want to share with you. At this time, I would like to discuss my concerns regarding the most recent information presented to the public regarding the merger of P.J. Hill and Paul Robeson. Although these plans are not final, it is important that I discuss the possible merger as it relates to the budget. The merger of Paul Robeson and P.J. Hill is problematic. Plans discussed by the Chief School Administrator noted that P.J. Hill School increased the size by doubling it. This plan poses a serious problem for P.J. Hill's majority African American population for a number of reasons. Research suggests that smaller elementary schools are beneficial for elementary aged students. According to the Consortium on Chicago School Research, on average research indicates that an effective size for an elementary school size is in the range of 300 to 400 students. The social behavior of the ethnic minority and low income students is even more positively impacted by small schools than that of other students. African American students learn in a family-centered environment. The proposed merger with the various equity and staff in transfer, causing a breakup of the P.J. Hill family - it sounds to me that some of the lessons learned in our recent institutional racism series have fell to deaf ears. I have found Mr. Ribon's rhetoric to be racially insensitive, and it's clear that he lacks understanding of how African American students learn. He also lacks the understanding of African American culture.....*inaudible*..... His resume indicates very little official experience working with African Americans in an educational setting. Mr. Ribon has caused racial divisions in our community. It is clear to me that he is unfit to lead this district. The bottom line is that the mergers will be seriously impacted by the budget. I am aware that there will be a final budget, I am also aware that the Board approved this; but rest assured you, the final budget will be challenged.

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At this time, President Bouie asked for a moment of silence for Gloria Wilkerson, Teacher at Kilmer Middle School, who passed away.

**BOARD DISCUSSION & ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA**

President Bouie advised that Board action today is just for submission of the 2017-2018 Budget. He asked for any Board comments.

Dr. Graham wished to take the opportunity to applaud the Business Administrator and Superintendent for their work on the budget. He observed how difficult this process has been; and he expressed appreciation for them making sure that there will not be any layoffs this year.

Ms. Vandenberg echoed Dr. Graham's remarks.

Mr. Truehart reiterated that tonight's action is just for submission of the budget, and he assured the community that there will be an opportunity for their participation when the Board presents the budget for their input.

Mr. Bouie recognized Ms. Howard and her staff, and he thanked them for the time they put in to get the budget completed.

**SUBMISSION OF 2017-2018 BUDGET**

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Trenton Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the Resolution for **Submission of the 2017-2018 Budget** to the New Jersey State Department of Education as follows:

General Fund	\$238,047,188
Special Revenue	\$ 42,817,364
Tax Levy	\$ 21,968,735
Total Budget	<u>\$302,833,287</u>

Motion was made by Dr. Graham and seconded by Ms. Daniels-Lane to approve the Submission of the 2017-2018 Budget. The motion was **approved** by all Board Members present.

<b><u>ROLL CALL</u></b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>
Addie Daniels-Lane	X		
D. A. Graham	X		
Fiah Gussin	absent		
Jane Rosenbaum	X		
Gerald Truehart	X		
Lucy Vandenberg	X		
Heather Watson	X		
Gene Bouie	X		

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**ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION**

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Trenton Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, accepts funding from the following generous donor:

<b>DONOR</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>RECIPIENT</b>	<b>PLANNED USE FOR FUNDS</b>
Douglas Palmer	\$176.00	Business Office	Purchase of bus tickets for non-remote students

Motion was made by Dr. Graham and seconded by Ms. Vandenberg to approve the Acceptance of Donation. The motion was **approved** by all Board Members present.

<b><u>ROLL CALL</u></b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>
Addie Daniels-Lane	X		
D. A. Graham	X		
Fiah Gussin	absent		
Jane Rosenbaum	X		
Gerald Truehart	X		
Lucy Vandenberg	X		
Heather Watson	X		
Gene Bouie	X		

Motion was made by Mr. Truehart and seconded by Ms. Vandenberg to adjourn the meeting. **All** were in favor, **0** opposed **0** abstentions.

**ADJOURN 8:10 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted

*Jayne S. Howard*

Jayne S. Howard  
 Business Administrator/Board Secretary