

School Ethics Commission Meeting Public Session Minutes

September 29, 2020

Chairperson Robert Bender called the meeting of the School Ethics Commission (Commission) to order at 9:33 a.m.

Notice of the meeting was provided to the State House Press Corps and the Secretary of State and filed as required by the Open Public Meetings Act.

I. Roll Call

Roll Call	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Present	X	X	X		X		X	5
Absent				X		X		2

Also in attendance were Kathryn Whalen, Director, Offices of School Ethics and Compliance, staff member Jeannine Pizzigoni, and Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Jaclyn Frey. Everyone in attendance at the meeting participated via telephone due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

II. First Public Comment

At the start of the meeting, Director Whalen explained to the public (who also accessed the meeting by telephone due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic) how the meeting would be conducted. More specifically, it was explained that the public would be afforded the opportunity to provide public comment regarding his/her case; the Commission would then adjourn to executive session (on a different conference line); the Commission would return to public at approximately 12:00 p.m.; at that time, members of the public would be afforded another opportunity to provide public comment in connection with his/her case; and then the Commission would vote on matters pertinent to its business.

9:35 a.m. Claire Odierna, the named Complainant in the matters docketed as C24-20, C27-20, C31-20, C32-20 and C46-20, noted her attendance, thanked the Commission for its time and consideration, and indicated she is available to answer any questions that the Commission may have regarding her matters.

9:36 a.m. Joan Banez, the named Complainant in the matter docketed as C21-20, noted that she had technical difficulty connecting to the meeting, thanked the Commission for reviewing her Complaint, and noted that she was waiting to see the next step(s) in the processing of her Complaint.

9:37 a.m. Mark DiIonno, the named Complainant in C45-18, a matter pending before the Commission but not on the current Agenda, noted his presence, thanked the Commission for its time and consideration, and read the following statement:

In July of 2018, I filed an ethics suit against Superintendent Anne Mucci and the Mountain Lakes Board of Education (C45-18), alleging that an unethical and illegal closed-room curriculum change was done by the MLBOE to aid the children of Dr. Mucci and Dr. James Hirschfeld, a member of the board.

On March 27, 2019, the School Ethics Commission issued a statement of probable cause to allow the suit to go forward. Since then, not a single witness who either had first-hand knowledge or was victimized by the allegations has been called as a witness or deposed in the prosecution of the complaint.

The complaint alleges that the board denied weighted-grades for an honor class to two freshmen and a sophomore who had all rightly enrolled after meeting prerequisites and were excelling in the course.

The allegation stated that the freshman children of Dr. Mucci and Dr. Hirschfeld, would have fallen behind in the race for valedictorian, and not been able to catch up if all the students got straight A's for the duration of school, which was very likely, as the four were the top students in the Class [of] 2021.

The sophomore seemed to be penalized just to give as a defensive cover for the plot against the two freshmen. Eventually, that young man had the weight restored and he did, in fact, graduate as valedictorian last year, but, again he was in the class above the children of Dr. Mucci and Dr. Hirschfeld.

I suspected, too, that the board found it easy to manipulate the situation because two of the students were Chinese and the third was Hispanic. The parents of both Chinese boys were fresh immigrants, struggled with the language, and are conditioned to not question authority. The mother of the Chinese freshman, Mrs. Ding, stated at a public meeting that her son was shamed and "made to feel like a criminal" by Dr. Mucci who accused him of gaming the system when she explained why he would not receive the weighted-grade.

This was done in a private meeting Dr. Mucci arranged, not in the appropriate or normal presence of either the high school principal, or the young man's guidance counselor, who signed off on his enrollment in the class. Mrs. Ding only made this allegation publicly to counter a public statement by Dr. Mucci that the Dings were aware all along the young man wasn't eligible to take the class.

This is extremely important because in Dr. Mucci's repeated defense that the weight-grades were removed to "level the playing field," she could have easily done that by saying the students could take one less AP course moving forward. It seems the meeting with the Dings was designed to browbeat and humiliate them.

I prepared the ethics suit in defense of these students strictly as a concerned citizen and, as Pulitzer Prize winning newspaper editor and finalist as a columnist, the board's explanation didn't pass the journalistic "smell test." I had no other agenda. All my children had graduated Mountain Lakes HS, without incident or controversy, and I never had a conversation with Dr. Mucci or any board member about my children's academic or extracurricular experiences in school.

In the suit I provided the Ethics commission with the names of the two Chinese students and contact information for their families. I also provided contact information for Jeremy Davies, the principal at Mountain Lakes at the time, who was willing to provide a narrative of curriculum change and the reasons why it was done in such a clandestine manor, and the ensuing fallout that led to either the resignation or firing of every teacher or administrator involved.

I was delighted to see the Ethics Commission agreed to move the case forward after Dr. Mucci's motion for dismissal and my rebuttal nearly 2 ½ years ago. In that rebuttal I implored investigators to, at the very least, speak to Mr. Davies, who told me personally that he resigned his position after he was ordered to deny these students the honors' grade weight, which he believed was unethical, improper and damaging to the student.

Recently I learned that the Assistant Attorney General handling the case inexplicably failed to contact any of the people listed in the complaint who had knowledge of this scheme, including Mr. Davies and the Chinese parents. Their side of the story still has not been heard to verify the allegations in the complaint the School Ethics Commission deemed worthy of further investigation.

I am currently the press secretary for Newark Mayor Ras Baraka and the values of our administration is based on equitable treatment for all. Through that lens, I believe (sic) the School Ethics Commission should be very concerned that these Chinese students were singled out. These students come from humble, hard-working parents who value excellence in the children's endeavors. They were treated dismissively and carelessness bordering on disdain by Dr. Mucci and the MLBOE that runs a predominately white, upper-middle class school community.

The Assistant Attorney General's decision to not hear them out and potentially dismiss the charges compounds that prejudicial treatment and victimizes them again.

I ask that the School Ethics Commission again look at how the case was handled and demand that the above witnesses and victims are given their day in court.

9:40 a.m. Heather Garcia, the named Respondent in the matter docketed as C16-20, noted her presence, thanked the Commission for reviewing her case, and informed the Commission that she is available to answer any questions.

9:41 a.m. Thomas Glavin, the named Complainant in the matter docketed as C23-20, noted his presence, thanked the Commission for “taking his case,” and offered the following statement:

My name is Thomas Glavin and I am the author of complaint C23-20 against 5-year Mountain Lakes Board of Education member James Hirschfeld.

I come before you to urge you to NOT DISMISS the case against James Hirschfeld but to pursue it fully. I do not have a child in the Lake Drive School for The Deaf but I do have a younger brother with severe hearing disabilities. I wrote the complaint on behalf of the Lake Drive School students who were grossly discriminated against and the Lake Drive School staff members who have expressed to me that they are scared to file a complaint against a ML Board of Ed member, who has approval rights over their employment contracts.

I am not going to discuss the case in detail, as I believe I have laid out my case to the best of my ability in my response to James Hirschfeld’s Motion To Dismiss.

I do want to make you aware that in a recent OPRA request of emails, during the exact time covering this complaint between ML Board of Ed members and a small group of ML residents claiming to be financial experts, provided to me this past week, contained further evidence in support of my case that James Hirschfeld was deceitfully working behind the scene with community members in undermining the former Acting Superintendent, the former Business Administrator, and against his own fellow board members on the Finance Committee. In fact, the OPRA emails, and attachments, provided evidence that confidential specific Lake Drive School student’s individual class information was accessed illegally to help James Hirschfeld justify his position in penalizing the Lake Drive School students and to manipulate higher costs to their budget.

James Hirschfeld already has an ethics complaint case (C45-18) against him where Asian students were wrongfully harassed, intimidated and wrongfully penalized.

Now James Hirschfeld has gone after our most vulnerable student population at the Lake Drive School for the Deaf here in Mountain Lames.

Please do not make the Lake Drive School students victims of wrongful discrimination. As the NJ Department of Education Ethics Commission please investigate this case vigorously to defend the integrity of our public education system and hold people like James Hirschfeld responsible for their actions.

III. Executive Session

At **9:48 a.m.**, the following **Resolution** was read:

Whereas, the Open Public Meetings Act (*N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.*) authorizes the Commission, a public body, to meet in Executive Session under certain circumstances; and

Whereas, the Open Public Meetings Act requires that the Commission adopt a Resolution at a public meeting to go into Executive Session; and

Now therefore be it resolved that, consistent with the provisions of *N.J.A.C. 10:4-12(b)*, the Commission will adjourn to executive session to discuss matters which, by statute, are regarded as confidential and also to discuss matters possibly involving litigation, specifically: C59-18; C16-20; C23-20; C24-20; C27-20; C30-20; C31-20; C32-20; C46-20; D01-20; C07-20; C18-20 and C22-20 (Consolidated); C19-20; C20-20; C21-20; C26-20; C28-20; A19-20; Undocketed Stafford Township Board of Education; A20-20; A13-20; A15-20; A16-20; A17-20; A18-20; C13-20; C17-20; Doctrines of Necessity submitted by the Gloucester City, Stafford Township, and Little Egg Harbor Boards of Education; consider request from Complainant in connections with C45-20; review correspondence from Respondent in connection with C09-20; provide update regarding the deadline for the filing the 2020 Personal/Relative and Financial Disclosure Statements; and provide update on the status of the proposed Chapter 28 regulations; and

Now therefore be it further resolved that the Commission will return to open session to conduct business at the conclusion of Executive Session.

Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss the matters set forth in the foregoing Resolution.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

IV. Return to Public/Second Public Comment

At **12:36 p.m.**, a motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Michael Collins, to return to public session for the purpose of receiving public comment/testimony.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

12:38 p.m. Joan Banez, the named Complainant in the matter docketed as C21-20, again noted her attendance, but did not offer any other public comments.

12:39 p.m. Lisa Yourman, a friend of the named Respondent in the matter docketed C30-20, noted her attendance, offered her support for Respondent, and noted that she has been a member of the community for 47 years. Ms. Yourman stated that Respondent has “an upbeat personality,” and “did not cause any ill harm to the members of the community.”

12:41 p.m. Vladimir Itkin, a friend of the named Respondent in the matter docketed as C30-20, noted his attendance, indicated he resides in Fair Lawn, and is also a member of the Board. Mr. Itkin stated that Respondent “knocked on the door of Complainant” and although it may “not have been the right thing to do, it does not rise to the level of an ethics complaint.” As to Complainant’s assertion that “people may not speak up” for fear that a board member may come to their home, Mr. Itkin notes, “over 150 questions were asked” at the last board meeting. “No one was scared to attend and to ask questions.” Mr. Itkin further stated that Respondent is “very passionate about doing good things for students and the tax payers.” His “intentions are very good.”

12:43 p.m. Heather Garcia, the named Respondent in the matter docketed as C16-20, again noted her attendance, but did not offer any other public comments.

12:44 p.m. Claire Odierna, the named Complainant in the matters docketed as C24-20, C27-20, C31-20, C32-20, and C46-20, again noted her attendance, and again thanked the Commission for its time in reviewing her Complaint. Complainant also stated that her “detailed Complaint” contains a lot of personal information and explains how she and her family were impacted by the actions and decisions by the named Respondent(s) in each matter. Complainant again noted her willingness to answer any questions from the Commission.

12:46 p.m. Thomas Glavin, the named Complainant in the matter docketed C23-20, again noted his attendance, stated that he did not have any further comments.

12:47 p.m. Janet D’Innocenzio, a friend of the named Respondent in the matter docketed as C30-20, noted her attendance, and stated that she is a retired teacher who worked in the district for more than 35 years. She further stated that she was a colleague of Respondent and that this is a “horrible unwarranted complaint.” Ms. D’Innocenzio noted Respondent wanted “to reach out to inspire students during COVID-19,” and that “He did not intend malice.” Ms. D’Innocenzio explained that it is part of Respondent’s nature to want to speak with people in person. Ms. D’Innocenzio stated that Respondent wanted to “settle his differences amicably,” in person, and noted that he is a “young,” “family man” who “did not mean any harm.” Ms. D’Innocenzio concluded by asking the Commission to dismiss the complaint because it is “a horrible attack” on Respondent.

12:49 p.m. Rita Fayvelevich, a friend of the named Respondent in the matter docketed as C30-20, noted her attendance and indicated she is a resident of Fair Lawn. Ms. Fayvelevich stated that in her opinion, Respondent’s “actions are not controversial.” She further stated that Respondent “truly cares about the children and residents of Fair Lawn.”

V. Complaints to Review

C59-18 Motion was made by Richard Tomko, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to table the matter and request additional information.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C16-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C23-20 Motion was made by Michael Carucci, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C24-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C27-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C30-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C31-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C32-20 Motion was made by Michael Carucci, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C46-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

VI. Orders to Show Cause

D01-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the order to show cause as written and to mail.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

VII. Decisions to Adopt as Written

C07-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Michael Carucci, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X			3
No								0
Abstention			X				X	2

C18-20 and C22-20 (Consolidated) Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Michael Carucci, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X			3
No								0
Abstention			X				X	2

C19-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Michael Carucci, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X			3
No								0
Abstention			X				X	2

C20-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Michael Carucci, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X			3
No								0
Abstention			X				X	2

C21-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Michael Carucci, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X			3
No								0
Abstention			X				X	2

C26-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Michael Carucci, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X			3
No								0
Abstention			X				X	2

C28-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Michael Carucci, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X			3
No								0
Abstention			X				X	2

VIII. Advisory Opinions

A19-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to draft the advisory opinion as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

Undocketed Stafford Township Board of Education Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Michael Collins, to draft correspondence as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X			4
No								0
Abstention							X	1

A20-20 Motion was made by Richard Tomko, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to draft the advisory opinion as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

A13-20 Motion was made by Michael Carucci, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to table this matter.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

A15-20 Motion was made by Michael Carucci, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to adopt the advisory opinion as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X			3
No								0
Abstention			X				X	2

A16-20 Motion was made by Michael Carucci, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to adopt the advisory opinion as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X			3
No								0
Abstention			X				X	2

A17-20 Motion was made by Michael Carucci, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to adopt the advisory opinion as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X			3
No								0
Abstention			X				X	2

A18-20 Motion was made by Michael Carucci, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to adopt the advisory opinion as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X			3
No								0
Abstention			X				X	2

IX. Administrative Dismissals

C13-20 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

C17-20 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

X. Other Business

Doctrines of Necessity (3): Submitted by Gloucester City, Stafford Township, and Little Egg Harbor Boards of Education. These matters were on the agenda for informational purposes only.

Request from Complainant to amend the Complaint in connection with C45-20 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Michael Carucci, to draft correspondence as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

Review correspondence from Respondent in connection with C09-20 Motion was made by Michael Carucci, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to draft correspondence as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X		X	X	X		5
No								0
Abstention								0

Update on the deadline to file 2020 Personal/Relative and Financial Disclosure Statements
This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

Update on the status of the proposed Chapter 28 regulations This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

XI. Minutes

Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the public minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting conducted on July 21, 2020, as *amended*.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

Motion was made by Richard Tomko, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to adopt the public minutes of the Special meeting conducted on July 31, 2020.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X		X		X		X	4
No								0
Abstention		X						0

Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Michael Carucci, to adopt the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting (public and executive) conducted on August 25, 2020.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X			3
No								0
Abstention			X				X	2

XI. Old Business / New Business

Commissioner Tomko publicly thanked the Commission’s staff for its efforts in continuing to effectively hold and conduct monthly meetings despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless,

Commissioner Tomko wanted to emphasize his position that the meetings of the Commission should be conducted in-person, and should not be conducted remotely. In this way, just as school districts are expected to reopen and provide live instruction to students, the important work of the Commission should also be done in-person.

Following Commissioner Tomko’s comments, Director Whalen asked the Chair to indulge another member of the public who had great technical difficulty joining the meeting, and to permit her to make public comment.

1:07 p.m. Kathleen Miesch Echevarria, the named Complainant in the matter docketed as C30-20, apologized for the technology issues that she was experiencing and thanked the Commission for considering her Complaint; emphasized that during these times, people need to feel “comfortable” about offering public comments; when a person says “no” it should always mean “no”; and clarified that she initiated her Complaint not because of Respondent’s statements at the Board meeting, but because of his actions. Complainant also stated that, following this situation, the Board no longer requires people who speak at public Board meetings to provide their home address. Complainant applauded the Board for acting so swiftly in response to her concerns about Respondent’s conduct.

XII. Adjournment

At 1:10 p.m., a motion was made by Michael Collins, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adjourn.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Michael Collins	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Jude A. Tanella	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

Submitted by:

Jeannine Pizzigoni

Approved by:

Kathryn A. Whalen, Director