

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
MARCH 23, 2004

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on March 23, 2004, in the Auditorium of the Carl Sandburg Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Mr. Richard M. Eccles, President  
Dr. William H. Spitz, Vice-President  
Mrs. Sue C. Barrett  
Mr. Jason Bowman  
Mrs. Susan Cummings  
Ms. Carol A. Drioli  
Mrs. Kimberly Jowett  
Mr. Ritchie Webb

**ADMINISTRATORS:**

Mr. P. Howard Wilson  
Dr. Raymond J. Boccuti  
Dr. Sandra Costanzo  
Mr. Harry Jones  
Mr. Joseph V. Paradise  
Mr. Richard Marotto  
Mr. Bruce Wyatt

**BOARD MEMBER NOT PRESENT:**

Mrs. June R. Bostwick

**SOLICITOR:**

Thomas J. Profy, III, Esquire

**SECRETARY:** Mrs. Anita E. Walls

**OTHERS:** Approximately 55 persons from the public, staff and press

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:**

Ms. Stephanie Huston

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**Call to Order**

Mr. Eccles called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Eccles requested those in attendance join in the salute to the flag.

**Announcements**

Mr. Wilson introduced Dr. Richard O. Coe, Executive Director of the Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22, who was invited to provide Board members with information regarding programs and services. Dr. Coe acknowledged Ms. Drioli for representing the Neshaminy School District on the IU Board for several years. Dr. Coe provided a handout to all Board members. Dr. Coe advised that the programs and services division of the IU is the arm that provides the professional and technical support to the staff at Neshaminy School District. Dr. Coe believes that these programs have a direct impact on the teaching and learning process that goes on in the classroom. Dr. Coe referred to a Courier Times article entitled "Planning in the Palm of Their Hand." This single article demonstrates the work of the programs and services division. The article encompasses professional development and training programs. The content and focus of this particular training program is technology. Dr. Coe advised that the funding for the program came from a grant acquired. This is a cooperative project and every school district in Bucks County has participated in some way in this particular program. The IU has the ability to bring in experts that no single district would have access too. The IU also utilizes individuals from various districts. Dr. Coe advised that Mr. Marotto, Dr. Boccuti and Dr. Costanzo are individuals who have offered their expertise to other districts. This program was a pilot program which enabled the IU to acquire equipment and enabled districts to make an informed judgment as to whether or not this equipment was worth the effort in terms of investing the district's own money. Dr. Coe advised that part of the training reached out to non-public schools.

Dr. Coe advised that the Pennsylvania School Code requires that each school district annually vote on the IU programs and services budget. The local district contribution is done through a fair share system. The state annually updates a formula, which includes size of each district and a weighted wealth factor.

Mr. Wilson thanked Dr. Coe for his informational presentation.

### **Student Representative Report**

Ms. Stephanie Huston, Student Council President, reported the following:

- Blue Team won at Gym Night.
- Student council raised over \$1,000 in Gym Night links, which was donated to the American Cancer Society in memory of Mrs. Hofmann.
- March Madness basketball tournament will be held on Friday, March 26.
- The Playwickian included a two page spread dedicated to Mrs. Hofmann.
- A memorial garden of daffodils will be planted in the courtyard in memory of Mrs. Hofmann.
- Welcome Back Spring Concert will be performed by the concert choir, symphonic band and wind ensemble at the Neshaminy High School Auditorium.
- Hockey would like to be recognized as a school sport - Could the School Board possibly assist in this matter?

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Ralph Clark, Levittown, PA, stated that he was a former school board member and currently is tax collector of Middletown Township. As the tax collector he hears from more taxpayers than anyone else in this auditorium. Mr. Clark stated that the new high school bond issue is for approximately \$97M. The financing costs for the \$97M are approximately \$7M. The after budgetary savings, which has been a discussion of this Board and in the newspaper, either is going to cost 26 mills or as Dr. Spitz says after all the savings it may cost only 11 mills. Mr. Clark is disappointed that only two board members have ever inquired of him what the Board eight or ten years ago intended for renovations at the high school. Mr. Clark participated on many committees. Mr. Clark advised that if the bond issue were cut in half there would be a savings of \$3.5M. The community has been disrupted enough. The public is wondering what is going on. Mr. Clark questioned why there has not been any hybrid discussion regarding some type of renovation with this magnitude being discussed and advise the public so that the taxpayers when they go to vote on April 27<sup>th</sup> have something to discuss. Mr. Clark advised that the Carl Sandburg facility has been renovated. Mr. Clark advised that he has been in communication with Mr. Rutledge from BASCO. Mr. Rutledge is currently retired. Mr. Clark asked Mr. Rutledge whether BASCO has ever built a high school. Mr. Rutledge advised that they had stopped building new buildings because they were renovating. Mr. Clark asked the Board whether they would consider allowing Mr. Rutledge and himself to address the Board at the next Work Session and provide a presentation. Mr. Clark emphasized not to take any authority away from this Board, but to present something to the public.

Mrs. Joan Thomas, Langhorne, PA, stated that she understood that information would be provided to the public so that they could understand the increase in taxes. Mrs. Thomas noted that the prior video was put out with taxpayer money. Mrs. Thomas advised that it shows all the bad parts of the high school, but Mrs. Thomas did not see any of the renovated parts. Mrs. Thomas noted that different board members are providing different figures. Mrs. Thomas inquired about the one-sided figures or will there be a balance. Will figures for renovation be provided? How should the public make an educated decision on how they should vote if the figures are not provided. Mrs. Thomas is skeptical about the Board spending more of her tax dollars and putting out more information if it is not going to be two ways.

Mr. Fred Thomas, Langhorne, PA, advised that the Board already provided a piece to the public. Why is it being provided again? Mr. Thomas thought it was all cut and dry in 1990 when BASCO had a contract to refurbish the school from ceiling to floor with new roofs, boilers, library, etc. Mr. Thomas is concerned that all these new parts will be torn down. The BASCO bids were between \$35M-\$45M with the caveat of building 10-12 new classrooms. Mr. Thomas would like to see BASCO come back and go through the same scenario. Mr. Thomas

noted that one out of every nine dollars that he receives goes to the school taxes. That does not include car insurance, state taxes, federal taxes, etc. This could possibly double in the next ten years.

Mr. Alden Thorpe, Levittown, PA, stated that he is the committee person in Lower 7. Mr. Thorpe noted that for three years this Board has worked on a plan for the new school. Originally the Board worked with BASCO. Somewhere along the line BASCO was fired and \$6M was already spent on renovations. Then a new architect was hired and \$1.6M was paid to the new architect. At that time the voters lost confidence in the Board. Mr. Thorpe often wishes that the whole entire School Board would have been up for reelection. Mr. Thorpe advised that it would have been a lot easier if that were the case. Now he finds out that we are back in the same position because there are not enough votes to control the Board. Mr. Thorpe noted that at least the people on his side are not controlling the Board, because \$20,000 more dollars will be spent to convince the public. Mr. Thorpe is concerned that it will be one-sided like the video. Mr. Thorpe advised that BASCO renovated Maple Point. Mr. Thorpe cannot understand why BASCO was fired in the first place. Mr. Thorpe asked that question and he would like an answer.

Ms. Linda Brescia, Langhorne, PA, addressed a concern regarding what she conceives to be a lack of response from some members of the School Board regarding a very serious issue. Several months ago Ms. Brescia was directly threatened by a middle school student with what appeared to be a handgun. Ms. Brescia believes that at the district level it was handled appropriately, she was and continues to be very disturbed how it was handled at the upper administrative level. As a result Ms. Brescia expressed her concern and her dismay, in writing, to the School Board President at the time, which was early November and two members in her sending area. Ms. Brescia to date has received no reply although she specifically requested one and provided daytime and evening phone numbers as well as her address. As a result of the chronic illnesses of both her parents she was unable to address the issue publicly and directly until this time. As individuals representing the community, Ms. Brescia was hoping for an explanation as to the justification for a complete lack of response for an incident, which in Ms. Brescia's opinion, can only be characterized as a weapon's violation and a terroristic threat.

Mrs. Yvonne Butville, Levittown, PA, stated that she is behind the proposal to build a new high school. Why? Because Mrs. Butville has studied the facts. Mrs. Butville was on the study committee and was a Board member for four years. Mrs. Butville has looked at all the proposal, including the one presented by Mr. Clark. Mrs. Butville advised that there are many items and possibilities that have been reviewed. After looking at everything, the best for the students and taxpayers is the new building. Mrs. Butville noted that the sitting Board last year, all nine members, publicly stated that they decided that a new school building was the best way to proceed. After looking at the facts, they made that consideration. Mrs. Butville noted that feelings should not be entering into this. Renovation will be more costly for the taxpayers. Mrs. Butville noted that a new building will solve many of the district's current problems and get the district 50-80 years into the future. Renovations will be very costly and in 10-20 years the district will then need a new building. Building costs will have increased. Mrs. Butville noted that certain organizations have provided facts, however, they are only half facts. The facts should be fully presented so that the community is aware. Mrs. Butville noted that she has answered on several occasions why BASCO is no longer the architectural firm that is in control. Mrs. Butville noted that BASCO was not fired; they were let go because when the district realized that new construction was much better for the students and taxpayers, and began speaking with BASCO regarding new buildings, they advised that they had constructed zero new high schools. The Board then went with an architectural firm whose full time job is building new schools. Mrs. Butville noted that the students and community deserve more. The new building will actually not cost more; the taxpayer will actually save money to build new.

Mrs. Gail Longden, Langhorne, PA, read the following statement: "Times certainly have changed. Gone are the days of one room schoolhouses complete with the outdoor privy some of you have so fondly recalled in prior meetings. Yes, it may have been good enough for you, and for all of us, some seventy years ago, but that was then, and this is now. Unfortunately for all of us it has come time to face the truth and the truth is that renovated utility updates and cosmetic changes alone will not be enough to bring Neshaminy High School into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and it is certainly not going to give this high school what it needs to remain one of the top

districts in the state of Pennsylvania. I only wish that it were that easy. If you find yourself in doubt of the unbelievable list of deficiencies this school is operating under just ask any of the teachers or students that go there. We moved from out of state to this very district largely because of the Neshaminy reputation. We specifically chose this community. That is such a complement to what you have going here. I am asking that our children be given the choice of coming back to Neshaminy to raise their children and educate their children in an environment that can supply them with the technology they will need in the coming years. In my own hometown I personally did not have that choice because as the years went on the district lost all of its appeal. Mostly because the schools were patched and ignored and with that the district deteriorated. It is really a shame since it was really a wonderful place when I was young. In the last fifty years all of our lives have drastically changed and with that have the needs of our children. We must not allow our children to pay the price of an inadequate high school education by not allowing them a chance to excel and keep up with these quickly changing times. There is so much more they need to know in order to function in this world. People say that enrollment is decreasing. Why yet another school? I say to you we are not looking at the quantity of seats in a building, but the quality of education received there. I do not want my taxes to increase, and who does. The expenses that my husband and I will incur in the next ten to fifteen years while rearing three potentially college bound children is inconceivable in this day and age. We are not made of money as you may think. Our home is modest by today's standards, our employers have not left us with employer only pension contributions, and we cannot even begin to think to rely on social security to help get us through our senior years. Hopefully, there will still be Medicare left to help with our medical woes. In spite of all that, when you simply sit down and weigh the pros and cons of building versus renovating, as I and many have done in the last two to three years there really is only one right answer for this community. To keep it shining, to perpetuate good solid citizenship, to keep awesome teachers here, and to keep some of our best and brightest youngsters from leaving for greener pastures, to keep crime low and property value high, a new and much improved high school is the only way to go. A new school, one that everyone will want to come to will benefit all of us from the very youngest member to the oldest dearest elder. Financially the facts show that it just doesn't make sense to be penny wise and pound foolish. You projected renovations figures from \$30M to almost \$90M and we can certainly bet that they will come closer to the later. A patchwork of ongoing renovations with all the unforeseen extra costs, unmet times tables, distracted learning and unhealthy environments is not the answer and in the end we will all be left holding the bag. I sometimes wish for simpler times, safer times, less expensive times, but unfortunately I think we have all kissed those times goodbye. Please let us build for the future and for all of our futures. Thank you."

Mr. Solis Basen, Langhorne, PA, stated that with the Board's permission he would not like to speak about the new high school. Mr. Basen attended the meeting a little less than two years. At the conclusion of the meetings it is asked if there is any correspondence. Mr. Basen cannot believe that a district of this magnitude getting no correspondence that would be of interest to the Board members and the public. Mr. Basen thinks that some of this should be read. Further, Mr. Basen wished that Mr. Paradise and the finance committee would start working on the proposed budget for next year in order that it does not need to go down to the wire and become frantic.

Mr. Doug Longden, Langhorne, PA, stated that it is unfortunate that the high school has become such a large focus of the Board of Education, because at this point he does not know how many meetings have taken place, how many things have gone on, but it seems that the Board should be focusing their attention on other things. This high school issue has been dragging on. Mr. Longden finds it unfortunate that the new Board members were largely elected on an anti high school platform. Mr. Longden is concerned that they can be elected only because they don't like something, not on any platform of what they are going to bring to enlighten the students and help the students get better educated. Mr. Longden noted that in the paper today, the \$30M renovation, which is part of one wing in the Council Rock School District, ran into asbestos problems. Mr. Longden is sure that is just one small tip of the iceberg. This could potentially happen in Neshaminy School District. Mr. Longden is concerned further about the issue of division, a split of the young and old. Largely the people for the school are people that are younger and have children who will take advantage of the school. Those against the school are the elders in the community. Mr. Longden does not expect to get much from social security or Medicare. A society is supposed to be a community. The concept

that since my children are grown is a bogus argument. Mr. Longden has seen the CARE website, but cannot quite figure out what they care about. The last thing they are caring about is what is best for the students of this school district.

Mr. Kevin Yeingst, Feasterville, PA, responded to a question at a prior meeting. The question was asked by my taxes going up how is that going to help my property value? For \$75 the community will get a new school. The increase when you go to sell your home that property value of your home will be at least \$5000 more. People will want to move into a community with a new school. If remodeling occurs, your taxes will still go up. However, with a dilapidated school who will want to move into the community. How will you sell your house, you will get less for your money, where will you go? In Philadelphia people are moving out, homes will become vacant. Taxes are still going up because the tax base will be less. Mr. Yeingst stated that taxes will increase either way. Those on a fixed income can apply to the district for tax relief. Mr. Yeingst understands that the elderly in the age restricted communities do not have students in the district, however he does. Mr. Yeingst moved to the area because of Neshaminy School District and he wants to stay here.

Mrs. Marianne O'Connor, Langhorne, PA, addressed comments regarding the referendum. It is the same referendum those people against a new high school put people on the Board for. Now the referendum is here. The facts are being given out and only the facts that pertain to the referendum, now you are crying foul, it cannot be both ways. Many of the questions are repeated. Those people will not be happy until they get the answer they are hoping to get down the road. Everything has been answered. Facts are there. Don't listen to the rhetoric and false numbers and bogus articles. Mrs. O'Connor further discussed the March 23<sup>rd</sup> article of the Courier Times speaking about the Council Rock North that has an asbestos contamination problem. Even taking safety precautions, contamination can happen. The only way to ensure the students will not be put at risk of this kind of accident is to build a new high school. Asbestos is not the main reason to build a new high school. The facts overwhelmingly show that a new high school will cost the taxpayer less in the long run and will ensure the students an education to compete in today's world and give all 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students access to all high school courses and provide a safe and healthy learning environment for the students. Health seems to be one fact that the opposing side has not brought up. Mrs. O'Connor would like to know the price the opposition would pay to ensure the safety of her children. Children are the greatest commodity. There is no price too great to ensure that they have the best education and health and safety while they are being educated.

Mr. Joe DeAngelis, Langhorne, PA, advised that some have asked how he can be for a new high school if you have a child that goes to private school. Mr. DeAngelis does not mind giving back to the community. A new high school would provide better education. Mr. DeAngelis thanked the School Board for educating him regarding keeping 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the high school. Mr. DeAngelis has learned from realtors that when you build a new high school your home value will increase. Mr. DeAngelis feels that perception plays a part in this. Why is a house in Holland worth more than in Neshaminy? If the referendum fails the gap will widen. Citizens want to protect their investments. Homes are our greatest investment. People agree that a new high school for Neshaminy will close the gap between Neshaminy and Council Rock. Vote yes for a new high school.

Ms. Drioli responded to Mr. Thorpe that she personally gave him answer to the BASCO situation and why they were let go. They were allowed to stay on as the architect; however, a new firm was brought in to build the high school. Ms. Drioli further noted that Mr. Thorpe was concerned that he did not have control of the Board. Ms. Drioli is distressed by this. A majority of this Board has said to the community we will live with the results of the referendum. Ms. Drioli does not know who should be in control of the Board. Ms. Drioli also responded to Mr. Clark, who was a member of the Steering Committee. Ms. Drioli has listened to the opinions of this community. Ms. Drioli is also entitled to an opinion. Ms. Drioli will live with the referendum, but she is entitled to an opinion. Mr. Schoenstadt suggested to build a new high school. Other board members thought he was crazy. He suggested to look at the idea and the more and more the Board reviewed the situation the facts have revealed it to be the case. The building was built in the fifties, during the time of the steel mill and a rapidly growing community. Entire wings were put up in less than a year's time. The structural foundation of the existing building cannot support a second floor. A security nightmare exists. A different era exists. The

Board did not enter into the discussion of a new high school thinking it was the way to go, the Board evolved with it after learning the facts. Ms. Drioli feels a new high school is the best way to proceed. However, should the public decide that is not the way to proceed, she can live with that decision. Ms. Drioli does not like the accusation that someone does not have control of the Board.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Wilson announced that graduation is scheduled for Monday, June 14<sup>th</sup>. The seniors will finish Tuesday and will practice Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The rain date will be Tuesday, June 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Wilson noted that a final decision has not been made regarding snow make-up days. Mr. Wilson wanted to ensure the community that there was an independent administrative report called the Kroll Report in which security issues were dealt with. The security report was put together largely by educational personnel. A recommendation was made to do something other than use teachers and administrators to put together a report. Mr. Wilson is speaking with a firm involved with 911 and Columbine. They will come to the district and make recommendations and the district will implement as many of the recommendations as they make. The number one issue is the security and safety of the students.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Upon motion of Mrs. Barrett and seconded by Dr. Spitz, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the February 24, 2004 Public Meeting. Mrs. Bostwick was absent.

### **Approval of Treasurer's Report, Bills for Payment, Investments, and Exonerations of Personal and Per Capita Tax** – Mr. Paradise presented the following for approval:

- February 2004 Treasurer's Report, subject to audit.
- Bills for payment Check Register – February 2004.
- Escrow Fund, Three Capital Project Funds, Several Investment Funds.
- Budget Transfer Report (Working Copy 04-5).
- Personal and per capita tax exonerations reports for February 2004.

Mrs. Barrett questioned the check register regarding Steven Schoenstadt for reimbursement of auto bodywork in the amount of \$100.00. Mr. Wilson advised that this was for damage to his automobile during a school board meeting. Mr. Wilson advised that the district will cover an individuals deductible in a situation whereat the problem occurs on school property or when Board members are attending a conference.

Mrs. Barrett feels that sets a dangerous precedent. Things happen in life and people carry automobile insurance and you need to take responsibility.

Dr. Spitz believes that it is long standing Board policy. The district also receives coverage from PSBA. Dr. Spitz suggested that perhaps PSBA be contacted to see if their coverage would cover this situation.

Ms. Drioli noted that this incident occurred during a period when Mr. Schoenstadt was going through an extremely volatile situation and time on this Board. Ms. Drioli would not be surprised that it was not something inflicted upon him and not an accident.

Mrs. Barrett questioned whether there were many incidents involving teachers and is this an ongoing type of problem.

Mr. Wilson responded that the only time was during construction at the high school during the summer and a roofer did damage to a teacher's vehicle.

Mr. Wilson noted that if the district were to look into insurance coverage with zero deductible, it would cost much more the \$100.00 deductible for an incident.

Mr. Webb requested the solicitor to look into whether the district is liable in such a situation and in the future consider not paying same. Mr. Webb feels that acts of vandalism can take place anywhere and he does not see why taxpayers should be liable.

Dr. Spitz moved the February, 2004 Treasurer's Report be approved, subject to audit, and the January, 2004 bills for payment, Budget Transfer Report (Working Copy 04-4), Escrow Funds, Capital Project Funds, Investments Funds, and the February 2004 personal and per capita tax exonerations be approved. Mr. Webb seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the Treasurer's Reports, subject to audit, bills for payment, investments, escrow funds, three capital project funds, budget transfer report and exonerations of personal and per capita tax. Mrs. Bostwick was not present.

Mrs. Barrett questioned whether the bills that had just been approved had already been paid. Mr. Paradise responded that they were. Mrs. Barrett asked whether before the bills were actually paid the Board could review the check register. Mr. Paradise noted that is very difficult because contractual agreements, discounts, partial payments are made on construction. It would be difficult unless the Board met weekly.

Mrs. Barrett noted that other districts do present their check registers before payment is actually made so that the Board does in fact approve same. Mr. Paradise noted that this could be discussed in greater detail at the finance committee; however, it is a major change that would have many consequences.

#### **Approval of Bids**

Mr. Paradise presented the following bids for approval:

##### **Bid No. 04-28 Bus Washing System**

Bid Amount: \$18,354.60

Automatic bus washing equipment for the Transportation Department. Mr. Paradise advised that state law requires that the buses are kept clean.

##### **Bid No. 05-04 Athletic/Physical Education Supplies**

Bid Amount: \$69,399.21

The bid is for supplies for physical education programs and various team sports for SY 2004/2005.

Mr. Bowman moved the two bids be approved and Dr. Spitz seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the two bids. Mrs. Bostwick was not present.

#### **Certified and Support Personnel Actions**

Mr. Wilson presented the following for approval:

- Elections of Certified Personnel
- Addendum of Elections of Certified Personnel
- Resignations/Leaves of Certified Personnel
- Elections of Support Personnel
- Addendum of Elections of Support Personnel
- Resignations/Leaves of Support Personnel
- Addendum of Resignation/Leaves of Support Personnel
- Sabbatical Leaves of Certified Personnel

The personnel information appears on pages H-1 through H-7 and addendum pages H-1a and H-6a.

Mr. Wilson also presented the additional recommended Extra Curricular Staff and Salary Position for the 2003/2004.

Mr. Wilson requested approval of the personnel report as presented.

Mrs. Barrett commented that one of the teachers is going on leave in May and the class will be disrupted. This same teacher will return in September and go out on sabbatical in January. Over the period of these months students will be disrupted. Mrs. Barrett does not feel that it is right that the students are disrupted.

Dr. Spitz noted that the teacher is going on maternity leave and she does not have control over the situation. Mrs. Barrett is concerned that she is combining two leaves, maternity and sabbatical.

Ms. Drioli noted that this teacher is acting within the confines of the union contract and laws. The Board has attempted numerous times to address other issues such as this; however, it is out of the control of the Board.

Mr. Eccles requested that Board members not being skeptical or guessing on motives without speaking to the individual involved.

Mr. Bowman moved the personnel actions be approved and Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

Dr. Spitz noted that Mr. Marotto, Director of Elementary Education, is on the retiree list. Dr. Spitz noted that Mr. Marotto has always been extremely professional and very knowledgeable. Dr. Spitz stated that the Board will be sorry to see Mr. Marotto retire and thanked him for all his service to the district.

The Board unanimously approved the personnel actions. Mrs. Bostwick was not present.

**Motion: Appointment of Investment Banker**

Mrs. Cummings presented the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ADMINISTRATION AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS  
TO PROCEED WITH THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL  
OBLIGATIONS BONDS, SERIES OF 2004, OF THE  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**WHEREAS**, Neshaminy School District (the "District") has undertaken an extensive multi-year capital improvement program, consisting of renovations and improvements to various School District facilities (the "Capital Improvement Program"); and

**WHEREAS**, in anticipation of the issuance of general obligation bonds to finance the Capital Improvement Program on a permanent basis, the School District has advanced moneys from the general fund and obtained a short term loan from Wachovia Bank, National Association (the "Loan"), both pursuant to prior authorization of this Board, to provide funds for a portion of the costs of the Capital Improvement Program; and

**WHEREAS**, in order to repay the Loan and provide permanent financing for all of the costs of the Capital Improvement Plan, it is now necessary and desirable for the School District to authorize its professional advisors, in conjunction with School District officials and Begley, Carlin and Mandio, LLP, solicitor to the School District (the "Solicitor"), to prepare for the issuance of the School District's General Obligation Bonds, Series of 2004, in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$25,000,000 (the "2004 Bonds").

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Board of School Directors of the School District (the "Board") as follows:

1. Confirmation of Professional Advisors. The School District hereby confirms the appointment of Wachovia Bank, National Association, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as underwriter (the "Underwriter") and Saul Ewing LLP, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as bond counsel ("Bond Counsel"), for the financing program described herein and the issuance of the 2004 Bonds.
2. Authorization to Proceed with Financing of 2004 Bonds. The professional advisors, comprised of the Underwriter, Bond Counsel and the Solicitor, in cooperation with the School District Administration, are hereby authorized to take all action necessary to prepare for the issuance of the School District's 2004 Bonds to provide permanent financing for the costs of the Capital Improvement Program. The 2004 Bonds shall be issued in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$25,000,000. The 2004 Bonds shall be sold to the underwriter pursuant to a private sale by negotiation. The School District Administration and professional advisors are further authorized to prepare a Preliminary Official Statement for use in connection with the preliminary offering of the 2004 Bonds to prospective purchasers. The Underwriter is hereby authorized and directed to prepare and present to the School District at a meeting of the Board of School Directors to occur on Wednesday, April 14, 2004 or another mutually agreeable date within a reasonable time thereafter, a proposal to purchase the 2004 Bonds.
3. Further Approvals by Board. It is understood that all projects included in the Capital Improvement Program, which are not currently under contract, shall be undertaken in such order of priority and at such times as the Board shall determine by further action. The final terms and conditions of the 2004 Bonds are also subject to approval of the Board by further resolution to be considered at the time of the sale of the 2004 Bonds.
4. Effective Date. This Resolution shall take effect immediately and shall supersede all prior Resolutions to the extent that the same are inconsistent herewith.

Adopted: March 23, 2004.

Mr. Bowman seconded the motion.

Mr. Eccles requested a roll call on the Resolution. The roll call tally indicated the motion passed with eight ayes and zero nays. Mrs. Bostwick was not present.

**Motion: 2004-2005 Proposed School Calendar**

Mr. Eccles presented the following motion:

**WHEREAS**, each year the Board of School Directors must establish an official school calendar for the coming year; and

**WHEREAS**, the six participating school districts of the Bucks County Technical High School strive to establish a common school calendar; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of School Directors reviewed the proposed calendar at the March 9, 2004 Public Work Session; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed calendar was forwarded for comments to each of the employee bargaining groups.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOVLED**, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors adopt the attached school calendar for the 2004-2005 school year.

Dr. Spitz seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mrs. Bostwick was not present.

**Motion: Approval of Compass Learning Labs Software Lease**

Mrs. Jowett presented the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS OF NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT AUTHORIZING THE INSTALLMENT PURCHASE AGREEMENT DATED AS OF JANUARY 31, 2004 BETWEEN CLI FINANCIAL, DIVISION OF COMPASS LEARNING, INC. (FINANCE COMPANY) AND NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT (SCHOOL DISTRICT) FOR SOFTWARE FOR EIGHT (8) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COMPUTER LABS**

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of School Directors of the School District as follows:

1. **Determination of Need.** The Governing Body of the School District has determined that a true and very real need exists for the acquisition of the Equipment described on Exhibit "A" of the Installment Purchase Agreement dated as of January 31, 2004, between Neshaminy School District (School District) and CLI Financial, a division of Compass Learning, Inc. (Finance Company).
2. **Approval and Authorization.** The Governing Body of the School District has determined that the Agreement, substantially in the form presented to this meeting, is in the best interests of the School District for the acquisition of such Equipment, and the Governing Body hereby approves the entering into of the Agreement by the School District and hereby designates and authorizes the following person(s) to execute and deliver the Agreement on School District's behalf with such changes thereto as such person(s) deem(s) appropriate, and any related documents, including any Escrow Agreement, necessary to the consummation of the transaction contemplated by the Agreement.

**Authorized Individual(s):** Richard M. Eccles, Board President  
Anita E. Walls, Board Secretary  
P. Howard Wilson, Superintendent  
Raymond J. Boccuti, Assistant Superintendent

3. **Adoption of Resolution.** The signatures below from the designated individuals from the Governing Body of the School District evidence the adoption by the Governing Body of this Resolution on this 23rd day of March, 2004.

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Board President

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Secretary

Mr. Bowman seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the Resolution. Mrs. Bostwick was not present.

**Motion: Intermediate Unit No. 22 – 2004-2005 Budget**

**WHEREAS**, the Neshaminy School District is one of the thirteen school Districts in Bucks County that utilizes the services of the Bucks County Intermediate Unit No. 22; and

**WHEREAS**, the Neshaminy School District contributed to the support of the Bucks County Intermediate Unit; and

**WHEREAS**, the School Code requires that the Intermediate Unit budget be presented and acted upon by the Board of School Directors.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors approves the Bucks County Intermediate Unit Program and Services and Instructional Materials Budget for 2004-2005 in the amount of \$1,829,500 with our district share to be \$109,902.

Ms. Drioli seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mrs. Bostwick was not present.

**Motion: Summer Programs – Summer of 2004**

Mrs. Barrett presented the following motion:

**WHEREAS**, the Neshaminy School District has operated a successful summer school program for 46 consecutive years; and

**WHEREAS**, in recent years has operated completely on a self-sustaining basis via student tuitions; and

**WHEREAS**, the following programs have been discussed with the Neshaminy Board of School Directors:

- Secondary Summer School (Enrichment and Make-up)
- Summer Fine Arts including Art, Dance, Instrumental Music, and Summer Stock

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors approves the request to operate summer programs for the 47<sup>th</sup> year.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that students residing in Neshaminy School District be given first preference for program involvement and related program activities.

Mrs. Jowett seconded the motion.

Mrs. Barrett inquired where the programs would be held. Dr. Boccuti responded that traditionally it is held at Maple Point Middle School. Last year the program was moved due to repairs at the building. This year Summer Stock will be held at Neshaminy High School and the rest of the program at Maple Point Middle School.

Dr. Boccuti advised that the program is self-supporting, including all costs of salaries, benefits, electrical bills, custodial bills, etc. Every aspect is covered by student tuition and ticket sales for the Summer Stock performance and a complete financial report is presented to Educational Development Committee.

The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mrs. Bostwick was not present.

### **Federal Programs**

Mr. Wilson advised that there has been no change in Federal programs and the grants total \$1.4M to date.

### **Other Board Business**

Ms. Drioli inquired whether a grant could be obtained to reimburse the school district for providing information to the public regarding the referendum and advertising.

### **Correspondence**

The Board Secretary advised that there was no correspondence.

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Alden Thorpe, Levittown, PA, thanked Ms. Drioli for giving him all the credit in controlling the Board. Also Mr. Thorpe feels he is being put in the same category as Mr. Lindner who Ms. Drioli stated is a terrorist. Mr. Thorpe hears very well and hears Ms. Drioli very well. Mr. Thorpe knows that BASCO is a builder that could build a new school. Mr. Thorpe noted that Mrs. Butville spoke well over three minutes, but when it is for the cause the Board is apparently for, they will allow the public to speak over three minutes. Mr. Thorpe stated that the tax increase for the new high school will not cost taxpayers \$75.00. In fact, the bond just voted upon will cost taxpayers \$65 extra. If the school goes through the 28 mills will cost \$171, which is a total of \$236. This School Board could cause the community to go bankrupt. Mr. Thorpe does not care about other districts. Levittown and Middletown incomes are not that high. The community in Twin Oaks will soon need to move. Mr. Thorpe is representing the people that cannot afford to continually pay higher taxes without any concern. Mr. Wilson does not live within the District and it does not make a difference to him. Mr. Thorpe has children that he wants to visit and he does not want to move to South Carolina, Florida or Delaware. Mr. Thorpe wants to be able to visit his children and grandchildren. Some families in Twin Oaks cannot even afford to paint their house. Mr. Thorpe is attempting to get people together to help with this situation. This Board is affecting people's lives. Mr. Thorpe appreciates Mrs. Barrett being on the Board. Mr. Thorpe is not opposed to doing work on the school. Mr. Thorpe would like to have a new school. There is a point that the Board must recognize that the community they are serving cannot afford it. If the schools were taken care of properly, the last bond would not need to have been floated. There is no other tax base. People will not want to move into the district to pay these high taxes because we do not have the same houses as Council Rock.

Mr. Bowman questioned Mr. Thorpe's original comment and something that Mrs. Butville stated that BASCO renovated Maple Point which Mr. Bowman does not believe that BASCO renovated Maple Point, but the Ray Group renovated Maple Point. Mrs. Butville stated that BASCO had never built a high school. Mr. Bowman believes that BASCO was the original architect of Maple Point High School when it was a brand new building. Mr. Bowman stated the firm had a different name at that time.

Mr. Eccles advised that he had allowed several speakers to go over the three minute time limit.

Mr. William O'Connor, Langhorne, PA, stated that he is the father of four and resident of Middletown Township. Mr. O'Connor is a proud member of Building for Tomorrow. Much rhetoric and misrepresentation of facts has taken place over the Neshaminy High School issue. It will make it difficult for the public to make an informed decision. Mr. O'Connor states that in the Courier Times Mr. Lindner states: "We don't need a new high school, what we need is a good remodeling job on the current one that will last 30-40 more years." Not even the various BASCO analysis state that massive renovations will extend the buildings life span for more than another 20 years. His comments were to convince people that such alternatives exist and that will work. Mr. O'Connor quoted March 15<sup>th</sup> Courier Times letter to editor someone stated "We should move the 10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders into Neshaminy Middle School so we can renovate the high school." There are over 2,000 high school students and Neshaminy Middle School holds approximately 900 students. Mr. Schieber states on June 26<sup>th</sup> meeting "We do not want a new high school. We do not want major renovations at this time." Most residents do not realize what price we will be paying for our children's education in terms of renovation.

According to the BASCO report of 2002 the cheaper of the renovation plans will require as many as 24 portable classrooms spread through the high school property. BASCO report states: "This is a significant burden to impose on a high school class." BASCO later stated that they favored the new building option. Certain things are not negotiable. We want a 9-12 high school free of asbestos, classrooms conforming to current educational guidelines complete with resource and technology that will help the students succeed. One question exists for April 27<sup>th</sup>. A new Neshaminy High School – Yes or No. It is up to the Board to make its case. It is unfair for citizens to demand that we act like a district bound to a referendum, but then complain when you use funds and resources to support your case. Check out school district web sites in New Jersey and Illinois where referendums are required. Those sites clearly state the support of new schools and in those states the school districts pay money to the architects and engineering firms for public relations support. Based on the precedent set in states where referendums are required, quite frankly the District's communication plan is inadequate. To those in opposition of the new high school please stick to the facts. Don't sell your conjecture as facts. Don't try to deceive the public. Mr. O'Connor quoted Mr. Lindner on the January 28<sup>th</sup> board minutes: "No one is against a new high school." It is in writing. This Board is putting forth the referendum question to the public and please start making your case of why the Neshaminy School District needs and deserves a building for tomorrow.

Mr. Phil Schieber, Langhorne, PA, stated that it is a sad state of affairs when someone says it is a battle of the ages. Mr. Schieber is 66 years old and is proud of it. Mr. Schieber stated that the property tax system in Pennsylvania is very unjust and unfair. Finally, Harrisburg is speaking to that issue. Increase in sales tax or slot machines may help the burden on education. Seniors need to get a break. Mr. Schieber feels that it is just not the seniors that need to get a break. Seniors are not against public education. Mr. Schieber told his community that Neshaminy School District needs a new high school. Neshaminy School District cannot afford a new high school. Mr. Schieber has not moved from that point. No one denies that public education is valuable to the society. It is discouraging to hear a class distinction between ages. It must stop. Legislators need to move this along. Mr. Schieber stated that he was properly quoted by Mr. O'Connor. All people need to get the legislators to move on this issue. Mr. Schieber stated that he is still opposed to building the high school now. We need to defeat this referendum at this time. Mr. Schieber states we need to hold off. Mr. Schieber feels we are only seven to nine months away from getting the decision from Harrisburg. Mr. Schieber thanked everyone from the community for their interest. Many seniors in the Flowers Mill community are not wealthy. Mr. Schieber states that if, in fact, these taxes do rise as stated, he will be required to leave. Mr. Schieber is a contributor to this community. Not just in Flowers Mill, but serves as a hospital board member and auditor of Middletown Township. Other people in the community serve on public service boards. One tradition in America which Mr. Schieber would not like to see happen is that when elders in the Indian tribes could no longer contribute to the Indian tribes the tribes threw out the old people from the village. Let's not do that.

Mr. Mel Ginden, Middletown, PA, stated that one of the problems facing the entire community is the mixed messages that have come out about the cost of this project. It is very difficult to know what the project is going to cost. One Board member says it will be 26 mills, another states only 11 mills. The Board passed a bond issue that will add another 10 mills for the next 20 years which needs to be added on to the operating budget, etc. The public attends meetings and listens carefully and then finds out that the new building will cost an additional \$136,000 to operate yearly due to new standards. A possibility of a triple net basis which the client will take care of the new building, assuming they can rent same, but it will only cost the district \$500,000 to get the building ready for rental. The numbers create the problem for the public. Mr. Ginden is bothered by the split in this community regarding age. Mr. Ginden read the following statement: "One of the things that makes this country unique is the ability to agree to disagree. Many people have gotten up and spoken at these public meetings. I have spoken to you on an individual basis and you were more than kind to give me your time and opinion and listen to mine. Recently, at one of these open meetings a former Board member spoke up and mentioned that even though some may disagree with others it should not be put on a personal level. I agree one hundred percent with this. At this meeting I do not believe that this occurred. Because an individual expresses an opinion and tells of some difficulty that they may have regarding a particular topic that does not give anyone the right to put down that person or that community in which they come from. When this

is over and done we are one community. Right now we are two communities and that is what is sad. I hope that the information that comes out is true, honest and the people can make an educated decision and whatever that decision is we go from there."

Mrs. Maryanne O'Connor, Langhorne, PA, asked for Mr. Lindner and Mr. Thorpe to go back and read the board minutes where they were called terrorists. Mrs. O'Connor asks them to find that quote. Mrs. O'Connor believes that Ms. Drioli actually stated that your actions, which you are taking, are taking place in countries where there is terrorism. A big difference. Second of all, Mrs. O'Connor does not understand why people are saying they are not being told about the \$75 increase. It only pertains to the new school. The \$25M bond that was issued this evening has nothing to do with the new school. Trying to confuse people to sway your way. Mrs. O'Connor stated that the only confusion she sees seems to be from the people on the side of the opposition, that is the way they have made it, we tried to be reasonable. We were booed, hissed, etc. and including my 11 year old son. The only confusion is being spun by the other side. The side for the high school seems to have no problem understanding the facts. Mrs. O'Connor states that you cannot move unless people are willing to buy your home. Houses are being purchased left and right even though they are aware of everything that is going on. Mrs. O'Connor hears constantly "I can't wait till that new school comes through, because I can't wait to see the increased value of my home." Mrs. O'Connor will be proud to vote for the new school, know that I have helped support the children of this community, not just for my own, but for future generations.

Mrs. Rita Geddes, Feasterville, PA, stated that in Lower Southampton Township we now have a one percent earned income tax. We are doing our part for the senior citizens in paying more taxes in order to give them a break. Mrs. Geddes and her husband currently do not work in areas that pay the tax, so for us between the property taxes and local income taxes we will be paying 10% of our income. That does not include social security taxes, federal taxes and state taxes. Mrs. Geddes will not be eligible for social security until well into my seventies based on what has been put in. A notation exists at the bottom that states the social security administration does not guarantee this amount because it is projected that funding may not be available. Thousands of dollars are being paid into social security every year to help the senior citizens of the community and we will not see that money when we are that age. Mrs. Geddes has been a very good neighbor to people in her community and that needs to be seen of more often. A hybrid plan was looked over that Mr. Clark proposed as part of the Steering Committee and it turned out to be more expensive because the current building cannot house a second floor. The option became more expensive than either of the other two options according to the facts and figures given. In closing Mrs. Geddes stated that the most economic plan for the future is a new high school. Mrs. Geddes agrees that it is a sad state of affairs when people are more willing to throw money into slot machines than they are into the education of children. This is occurring across the state and generations. Mrs. Geddes feels that building a new high school is the most economical plan.

Mr. Howard Lindner, Langhorne, PA, stated that this is not senior citizens or young people. It is Neshaminy taxpayers. Mr. Lindner spent the last two weeks contacting young and old. Mr. Lindner is getting opinions. The majority of the people, young and old, in this Neshaminy School District, which includes two townships and four boroughs, does not want this new school. Mr. Lindner stated that the last Board lost the trust of this community. Even though 26 meetings took place at different locations. Different types of literature has been distributed. A film that was biased. The people voted out the Board members that were for a new school. That is a fact. Mr. Lindner stated that the people from the last Board, with the exception of Mr. Eccles, who still remains on this Board from the people that I have spoken with in the last two weeks, still don't trust the Board. They feel no representation from those Board members. Thankfully we have new people on this Board. After the next election there will be more new people on this Board. Mr. Lindner has tremendous relationships in Neshaminy School District due to his years of coaching, being an administrator in this school for 12 years and a teacher for 34 years. Mr. Lindner has the contacts to speak with people. If the majority would say new school that is the direction he would go. However, that is not the message Mr. Lindner is receiving. Mr. Lindner stated that there is a bi-partisan group of democrats and republicans together, called CARE. This group will get the correct information out to the public. Information regarding cost of a new building, renovation costs, etc. Neshaminy taxpayers come in all different age ranges.

Mr. Ralph Clark, Levittown, PA, clarified that he did serve on the Steering Committee and was skeptical when the options were two, build new or don't do anything. Mr. Clark stated that there needs to be a middle ground. From that came the suggestion of a hybrid. Never had a game plan to do anything with it. Something needed to be done. The architect renovated the school as is. Again, Mr. Clark never stated how to do the renovation. What the architect proposed at that meeting Mr. Clark would not agree with either. Please do not interpret that to be what I was planning on doing. It was never stated that way. If you plan on renovations you cannot build onto rooms that cannot withstand two stories. However, why can't things be torn down and build new foundations and build new two story additions in certain places in that building. There is a big split in this community. This Board needs to take the responsibility to put everything back together. Mr. Clark does not want to bring a proposal to the Board for renovating the building, however, Mr. Clark knows that Mr. Rutledge has those things and ability. Mr. Clark does not feel that the new architect looked into the renovation areas. That is Mr. Clark's request to the Board. Mr. Clark believes that the bond issue is going to lose, but that is what people are telling Mr. Clark in the tax collector office. If the referendum passes we will have a brand new school. Mr. Clark reminded taxpayers that Sandburg, Walter Miller, Ferderbar, Maple Point, were completely renovated schools and were not built new.

Mrs. Yvonne Butville, Levittown, PA, stated that many people have stated I don't think, I don't know, I don't feel, I don't understand. The ones that do are the School Board members that have taken the time and many hours to study the proposals. The best proposal and which was presented is the new building option. That was presented to the public. The best thing for the senior citizens financially is the new building. The renovations will be very costly. The new building is by far much better for the students in many ways and for the taxpayer financially. Mrs. Butville was part of a campaign to get information out. Mrs. Butville noted that the School Board members have been given all the facts to make the correct decision. The public can get all the facts. Put your trust into the School Board members who are not out to ruin this community. They were elected to do what is best for this community and all of them have decided that the new school building is the best.

#### **Board Comment**

Mrs. Cummings congratulated all the parents and staff at the middle schools for their wonderful performances at their annual musicals.

Dr. Spitz provided the following statement:

"I note with regret that the anti high school group known as CARE has now started to publicly disseminate misinformation and misstatements of fact about both the new high school proposal and the cost and nature of renovations. One such falsehood has been printed in the newspaper is that there will be a 28 mill increase every year for the next five years should a new school be built. This is not only wrong it is not even close. The gross costs of the proposed bond issue are 8.5 mills per year for three years as Mr. Webb has publicly stated on several occasions. This misrepresentation of 28 mills for five years exaggerates the gross costs of the new building by more than 400%. Mr. Webb claims that a report shows that a "first class renovation of the current high school would cost about \$60M. I am not aware of any such report but if he is it would have been appropriate for him to inform the Facilities and Finance Committee of which he is the chair, and it would be appropriate to first discuss that option at a public finance committee meeting, not at a partisan gathering of high school opponents. Perhaps my colleague is basing his statement on the 2002 BASCO report, which discussed a range of operations. The least expensive was the renovation with no additions to handle the ninth grade costing \$51M, designed to last only twenty years. This is much less than the 30-40 years quoted in the paper by the CARE group, but I suspect that they don't really care about that. They are simply picking and choosing the numbers that they like from the various architectural reports.

While I believe that the intentions of the anti high school group are sincere I am afraid that they are relying on certain aspects of these architectural reports without fully understanding their purpose and

limitations. For example, the 2000 BASCO report, part of which appears on the group's web site presents estimates, that besides being four years out of date, do not include any provisions for inflation, contingency costs, construction manager, the cost for required portable classrooms, the cost of asbestos removal, site work or demolition. The fact is that this report was entirely superceded by the 2002 report and it is simply misleading to quote numbers and estimates from it.

Another idea that some are floating publicly is the possibility of adding another wing onto the existing building for new science labs which are desperately needed. This would be just another bandaid that would add yet another tentacle onto this. (Dr. Spitz displayed a diagram of the existing Neshaminy High School).

The bottom line is this. If you vote yes on the referendum we will be able to move 9<sup>th</sup> grade to the new building and we will close a middle school. These moves will result in savings of close to \$3M every year. The net cost of voting yes is about \$6.22 a month for the average homeowner. If you vote no on the referendum my colleague says we may end up spending \$60M on a renovation. You will still have to spend a few dollars a month to pay for it, but then we will be faced with the same issues again in twenty years, except that we will have a 70 year old building to deal with instead of a 50 year old building that we have today. Is that really a smart investment for taxpayers? I ask the members of the vote no crowd to be honest with themselves and the community. Have they been reading the newspaper regarding the multimillion cost overruns for renovating Council Rock North High School or the new OSHA investigation into asbestos contamination?

Neshaminy High School's roof is filled with asbestos. And to my mind to remove same during a renovation while students and teachers are in a building is a reckless and dangerous pursuit that we don't have to undertake. Do we really want to put Neshaminy students at risk and subject them to years of disruption while renovations are going on? Do we really want to invest millions of dollars in a building that has a ridiculous physical layout as you have seen? Twenty-three different asbestos laden roofs, single pain glass throughout and electrical, heating, ventilation and plumbing systems that would need to be entirely replaced. Again, be honest with yourself and ask whether it really makes sense to make a huge investment in this building.

If those opposed to a new building would instead redirect their energy towards the real problem here, which are your state legislators who for twenty years have refused to enact tax reform that would help seniors we would all be in much better shape. Please do not hold Neshaminy students hostage to the failure of the state legislature to do their job. For those of you who agree with me I urge you to get involved with a group that is dedicated to the vision of a new high school. As you have heard earlier that group is called Building for Tomorrow.

Please send them an e-mail at [Buildingfortomorrow2004@yahoo.com](mailto:Buildingfortomorrow2004@yahoo.com).

If the Courier Times had shown any degree of fairness by giving this group equal time with the anti high school group I would not be doing this. The Courier is not being fair. [Buildingfortommorrow2004@yahoo.com](mailto:Buildingfortommorrow2004@yahoo.com). Building for Tomorrow is an independent group in favor of the new high school and dedicated to providing honest and open information about it. Don't be misled by a vocal minority into believing that renovations are a smart investment. If you have a positive view of this District and you want to see this community move forward please get involved with Building for Tomorrow. You can make it happen. Offer them your time and possible money to help move Neshaminy into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century."

Mr. Webb made the following statement:

"First of all Mr. Spitz you are absolutely correct. I don't know where the 28 mills came from. I didn't see that its 8 1/2, 8 1/2 it will be 26 mills on the third year. We do agree on that point. I guess my problem here is that everybody is really very credible. Mrs. Butville I have known her for a long time. I

believe she believes that everything she is saying is 100% correct. She thinks that is the best plan. Now I listen to my friends the seniors and they believe that what they are saying is correct. But, I guess if you get right down to it, who is correct? I have heard so many stories about BASCO that I am not sure what to believe. I hear ATS&R is the world's greatest builder, but yet I hear through the grapevine there are problems. But, so you probably have problems with BASCO or any other builder you would have or any architectural firm. I guess my point is, and I don't know how to go about this, but I would like to see BASCO come and make a presentation so that we get the facts out. Let them come here before the next board meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> and let them say exactly what it is they will do. When I have talked with them they tell me a lot of things different than what they are telling you. They tell me that this remodeling would last 30-40 years. They tell me there will be new roofs. And that is where that came from sir, out right, it was a BASCO report. It was nothing new that I pulled out and that is something that has been floating around the district for a long time.

And also, people are starving for information. The paper put that I was pushing anything. The question was if there is no school, is there an alternative and the truth is BASCO has 2 or 3 alternatives. But let's let the people see. Let BASCO come.

Mr. Profy, I don't know how to go about it, I would like to make a move to amend the agenda to call a roll call vote to have BASCO be allowed to present their findings, their plan here."

Ms. Drioli questioned whether BASCO has presented their position to us. Mr. Webb stated that BASCO told him that they never appeared before a public meeting with such a presentation.

Ms. Drioli stated that BASCO did appear before a meeting that was open to the public and the building committee. That was the meeting where the Courier went out and publicized erroneously that at the time was going to have a \$400 budget increase.

Ms. Drioli stated that at this point and time Ms. Drioli couldn't support that. If the referendum fails then I will go with what the voters want. This issue is in the hands of the public. Mr. Webb is asking for BASCO to come in and provide a presentation to the Board for one-half hour to present the facts. If the new school is superior there is nothing to be concerned about, however, if BASCO claims are correct people may feel different. Mr. Webb is concerned that people are being asked to choose between a school and no alternative. Let people see that there is an alternative. BASCO would provide this free of cost.

Mrs. Barrett comments that she would be interested in having such a presentation. The more information that is had the better. Ms. Drioli suggested that if this should pass the presentation could take place prior to the next Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Webb was concerned that the Finance Committee is not televised.

Mr. Profy stated that the proposal is to amend the agenda for tonight. First step is to make a motion to amend the agenda, however, under Roberts Rules of Order, pursuant to which you function, that is a two-thirds motion requirement. Second step would be vote on the primary motion, which would be to have an architectural firm come in and provide a presentation. Ms. Drioli noted then the Steering Committee's recommendation should also be brought out. Mr. Webb commented that he would have no problem with that. Mr. Webb would like to see both sides. We are not giving people a choice. We need to show both sides.

Mr. Webb made a motion to amend the agenda. Mrs. Barrett seconded the motion. Mr. Eccles requested a roll call vote. The roll call tally indicated the motion failed with five nays (Mrs. Cummings, Ms. Drioli, Mr. Eccles, Mrs. Jowett and Dr. Spitz) and three ayes (Mrs. Barrett, Mr. Webb and Mr. Bowman). Mrs. Bostwick was not present.

Mr. Eccles commented that in all interest and in good faith what was trying to transpire is to throw more options out for everyone. Mr. Eccles is in favor of options, but folks fought very hard for a referendum and Mr. Eccles strongly believes that a referendum is the correct thing to do. At this point and time we are losing site

of the issue. The issue is a yes or no vote on a \$97M bond issue. Mr. Eccles would love to have more options out there for everyone to look at. Will it make a difference? Is it too late to do that? I don't know. Mr. Eccles would not be opposed seeing this proceed to the Finance Committee and then have a recommendation. However, there is concern that this Board will be turned back into a circus. This Board has agreed over the last few months that we were going to present the proposal the way it was presented prior to the referendum.

Ms. Drioli feels that it is just an effort for the anti school people to make it more difficult.

Mrs. Cummings thanked the PTO at Carl Sandburg for having the refreshments and to the Principal for providing a tour of the building. Mrs. Barrett thanked the Principal and stated a wonderful facility, which is well renovated and very inviting.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Eccles moved the meeting be adjourned and Dr. Spitz seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Eccles adjourned the meeting at 10:30 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Anita E. Walls  
Board Secretary