

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES
(WORK SESSION)
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
November 12, 2003

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on November 12, 2003 in the Board Room of Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

BOARD MEMBERS:

Mrs. Kimberly A. Jowett, Vice-President
Mrs. Yvonne V. Butville
Mr. Richard M. Eccles
Mr. Steven E. Schoenstadt
Dr. William H. Spitz

ADMINISTRATORS:

Mr. P. Howard Wilson
Dr. Raymond J. Boccuti
Mr. Richard S. Marotto
Mr. Joseph V. Paradise
Mr. Bruce M. Wyatt

OTHERS: Approximately 12 persons from the public, staff and press

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Mrs. June R. Bostwick, President
Ms. Carol A. Drioli
Mr. Michael A. Soifer
Mr. Edward T. Stack

SOLICITOR :

Thomas J. Profy, III, Esquire

SECRETARY:

Mrs. Anita E. Walls

Prior to the Work Session an Executive Session was held.

1. **Call to Order**

Mrs. Jowett called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Mrs. Jowett requested those in attendance join in the salute to the flag.

3. **Public Comment**

Mr. Alden Thorpe, Levittown, PA, stated that he read the rules and regulations and it states that he should have been able to speak at the last Board meeting on two occasions, during the Work Session and then during the Public portion of the meeting. Mr. Thorpe was very disappointed that he was unable to have a second chance to speak, and that Mr. Eccles was the only Board member that spoke up in defense of Mr. Thorpe's position.

4. **Announcements**

No announcements.

5. **Items for Approval**

a) Contracted Transportation Services for 2003-2004

Mr. Paradise advised that there will be a motion at the Public meeting for the contracted transportation services for a total of 25 students which totals \$101,852.00 in transportation costs. Mr. Paradise advised that this figure is down from previous years. This is an estimate and same is enrollment driven. Additional students could be placed into the program.

b) Establishment of an Account with the Pennsylvania Treasury's INVEST Program

Mr. Paradise advised that by establishing this type of account with the Pennsylvania Treasury's INVEST Program the District will have the opportunity to participate in other investment instruments that help the District maximize investment income depending on the investment climate. Mr. Paradise advised that the investment climate is currently very poor.

Mr. Paradise noted that the motion will be made at the Public meeting on November 25, 2003.

c) Establishment of Accounts with Sovereign Bank

Mr. Paradise advised that the establishment of account with Sovereign Bank called a "pass-through account" is required to be approved by the Board. Mr. Paradise noted that a motion will be made at the Public meeting on November 25, 2003 to approve said "pass-through accounts."

d) Technical School Articles of Agreement

Dr. Spitz distributed a handout to all Board members describing the proposed changes to the Bucks County Technical High School Articles of Agreement. Dr. Spitz advised that these proposed changes are in regards to the funding formula. Three school districts have been unhappy with the funding formula: Morrisville, Bristol Township, and Bristol Borough.

Four proposed changes include:

- (1) Fixed Cost Calculation
 - Make fixed costs a set percentage of Tech School's total budget (tentative 23%)
 - Impact on Neshaminy for 2003-04 would be \$13,200
- (2) Minimum Contribution to Fixed Costs
 - Eliminate the 4% minimum
 - Affects only Morrisville School District who accounts for only 2.7% of enrollment
 - Impact on Neshaminy for 2003-04 would be \$0
- (3) Grade Level ADMs for Slot and Fixed Cost Allocation
 - Make allocations based on Grade 7-9. This proposal would simply accelerate by one year the impact of district enrollment trends.
 - Impact on Neshaminy for 2003-04 would have been \$23,500
- (4) State Subsidy
 - State sends subsidy to the Tech School based on sending districts aid ratio
 - Credit each District for its own share of ADM subsidies
 - Impact on Neshaminy for 2003-04 would be \$13,800

Dr. Spitz advised that the overall impact on Neshaminy School District for 2003-04 would have been \$3,500. Impact excluding #3 would have been \$27,000, which is 1.3% of the Tech School payment of \$2M.

Dr. Spitz advised that the Tech School would like all the sending districts to pass a motion before December, which is when the mid year convention takes place.

Dr. Spitz advised that this would be a motion at the November 25, 2003 Public Meeting to be considered for approval by the Board. Each sending district would need to do the same.

Dr. Spitz advised that to get changes to the Articles of Agreement requires a positive vote by all six sending districts.

Dr. Spitz further advised that the District's bill for the Tech School will most likely increase significantly next year due to the fact that the enrollment numbers are increasing.

e) Pride and Promise: Public Schools Achieve

Mrs. Butville advised that there will be a Resolution presented at the November 25, 2003 Public meeting stating that the district believes in public schools and what they stand for.

**f) Board Policies - #620 English As A Second Language
#110 Board Ethics and Conduct**

Mrs. Butville advised that Mr. Marotto has reviewed the 700 and 800 sections and only a few needed grammatical changes. Mrs. Butville further advised that Policy #620 and Policy #110 will be presented to the Board on November 25, 2003:

Policy #620 – English as a Second Language/Bi-Lingual Program

- The District is mandated by No Child Left Behind.

Policy #110 – Code of Ethics and Conduct

- This policy was drafted with help by PSBA.

Mr. Schoenstadt expressed concern with Section 324 of the School Code, and stated that he will not vote to support the policy. Mr. Schoenstadt stated that it creates a conflict on this Board and it is not appropriate at this time.

Mr. Profy advised that on page three, line 30, the word “compensate” should be deleted and the word “compromise” should be inserted.

Dr. Spitz questioned on page three, line 46, the clarity of “Board members who do so may be censured.” Dr. Spitz suggested the following change: “Board members who disclose such information may be censured.”

Mr. Eccles inquired who will make the determination when a Board member violates this policy. Mr. Eccles noted that some of the items in this policy are certainly a violation of our First Amendment right of free speech and he cannot support the policy. The Board is voted into office to represent the public. Mr. Eccles agreed to make some suggestions for the end of the month to be presented to the Board.

Dr. Spitz noted that this Board or any other Board has the right from the State to censure a Board member whether or not a policy exists. The purpose of this policy is not to trap a Board Member, however, it is to provide guidance.

Mrs. Butville noted that this is a type of orientation for new Board members who are not aware of what they are and are not allowed to do under the School Code.

Mr. Profy advised that the Policy is literally a verbatim PSBA document.

g) Approval of Bid/s Budget Transfers

Mr. Paradise reviewed the following bids:

Bid No. 04-22 – Exterior Door Replacements at Pearl Buck, Schweitzer, and Lower Southampton Elementary Schools and Maple Point and Sandburg Middle Schools

Bid Amount: \$188,300.00

Replacement of nine doors at Buck Elementary, five doors at Hoover Elementary, two doors at Schweitzer Elementary, twenty doors at Lower Southampton Elementary, four doors at Sandburg Middle School, and one door at Maple Point Middle School.

Bid No. 04-19 Boiler Replacement at Heckman Elementary School

Bid Amount: \$289,950.00

Replacement of boiler at Oliver Heckman Elementary School.

Bid No. 04-20 HVAC Replacement at Maple Point Middle School (Equipment)

Bid Amount: \$439,000.00

Replacement of rooftop air conditioning units at Maple Point Middle School.

Bid No. 04-21 HVAC Replacement at Maple Point Middle School (Installation)

Bid Amount: \$255,000.00

Installation of rooftop air conditioning units at Maple Point Middle School.

Mr. Paradise advised that Bid Nos. 04-19, 04-20, and 04-21 are to be paid for from the Capital Project Fund that the District has yet to determine how same will be funded. The Board needs to decide how to fund these projects. Presently, the District is paying for these projects through a “cash swap” from the current General Fund Cash and at some point during the course of the fiscal year the District needs to borrow money to address this need.

Dr. Spitz inquired as to the amount needed. Mr. Paradise stated approximately \$3M plus the \$2.2M, which will mature in December 2004. Mr. Paradise noted that there will be options. Mr. Schoenstadt stated that these are monies that would have come from the bond issue.

Mr. Paradise noted that these items are desperately needed. Discussion ensued regarding the replacement and installation of the units at Maple Point and time frame for completing the projects.

Mr. Wilson noted that the District has received criticism from the public that money was not being spent to maintain the current buildings and keep them up to date.

Mrs. Jowett noted that the low bidder on Bid No. 04-20 should read Worth & Co., Inc.

Mr. Paradise noted that the Board has the option to allow the incoming Board to handle same in December. However, the District needs to address these items. Mrs. Butville noted that she feels it is this Board’s responsibility.

Mr. Schoenstadt noted that the new Board takes their seats December 1, 2003, they were in a position to stop the bond issue, it is one of the decisions that they created for themselves to make. Mr. Schoenstadt stated that he will not make a decision for the future Board. Let them take their seats and deal with the issue they created.

Mr. Profy advised that the formal bidding process has taken place and more than ample bidder participation in the pre-bid conference and distribution of contract documents, so this Board can act upon one single bid. There is no limitation on the Board’s right to award the contract.

Mr. Schoenstadt's concern is creating a debt obligation for the future Board without involving them in the process and making the decision on that debt obligation. Mr. Schoenstadt is not willing to give the new Board that type of a problem. Let them deal with it and let them decide what type of loan to make, create a short-term bond issue, etc.

Mrs. Butville was concerned that problems would be created for the staff and students if these bids were not approved.

The four bids will be presented for approval at the Public Meeting on November 25, 2003.

Budget Transfer Report No. 04-2 (Working Copy) will be presented for approval at the November 25th Public Meeting.

6. **Item for Information**

Mrs. Butville distributed the proposed PSBA Bylaws Revisions, which was voted on and passed. Mrs. Butville noted that if anyone is interested in receiving a copy of the PSBA Legislative Platform, which the Policy Council adopted on October 23, 2003 to let her know.

Mrs. Butville noted that at this point there is still no Educational Budget, which has been passed in Harrisburg.

7. **Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Wilson commended Ms. Anne Schmidt and the eighth grade teams for organizing a Veterans Day Program at Maple Point. Over 65 veterans attended. Mr. Wilson thanked Ms. Jenkins for the wonderful article and covering the event for the District. The program was very moving, even for the students who attended.

8. **Committee Reports**

a. **Board Policies**

Mrs. Butville advised that the report was provided for earlier in the meeting.

b. **Educational Development**

Dr. Spitz advised that the meeting for this month was postponed.

c. **Facilities/Finance Committee**

No report.

d. **Intermediate Unit Board**

No report.

e. **Educational Foundation**

Dr. Spitz reported that a meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2003, at 7:00 p.m.

f. **Technical School Board**

Mrs. Butville reported that the Tech School had an Open House on November 6, 2003. Mrs. Butville further advised that the Tech School was used for the "Pie In the Sky" event, which benefits MANNA (Metropolitan Aids Neighborhood Nutrition Alliance).

g. **Technology**

Dr. Boccuti reported that the meeting was held on October 23, 2003. Mr. Stack is reviewing the draft of the detailed minutes of that meeting and same will be distributed upon completion.

The agenda included the following discussions:

- 2003-04 Technology Plan
- Elementary Computer Lab replacements
- Technology Lease options
- IT Department Staff

9. **Future Topics**

10. **Agenda Development for the November 25, 2003 Public Meeting**

11. **Correspondence**

Mr. Schoenstadt submitted correspondence into the record from Paula and Tom Kearns and Linda J. Brescia.

12. **Other Board Business**

13. **Adjournment of Meeting**

Dr. Spitz moved the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Schoenstadt seconded the motion. The Board voted to adjourn the meeting with five ayes. Mrs. Jowett adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita E. Walls
Board Secretary