

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC WORK SESSION MINUTES
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
March 5, 2013

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public work session on March 5, 2013 in the Harry M. Dengler, Jr. Performing Arts Center at the Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Scott E. Congdon, Vice President
Ms. Irene Boyle
Mrs. Susan Cummings
Mr. Mike Morris
Mr. Mr. Mark Shubin

ADMINISTRATORS:

Mr. Robert L. Copeland
Dr. Jacqueline Rattigan
Mrs. Barbara Markowitz
Dr. Geeta Heble
Mr. Anthony Devlin
Mrs. Theresa Hinterberger

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Ritchie Webb, President
Mr. Kim Koutsouradis
Mr. William Oettinger
Mr. Anthony Sposato

OTHERS: Approximately 25 persons from the public, staff and press

SECRETARY: Mrs. Jennifer Burns

SOLICITOR: Thomas J. Profy, IV, Esquire

1. Call to Order

Mr. Congdon called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

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

3. Announcements

None

4. Items for Approval Tonight

a) School Lane Charter School - Neshaminy

The Board will consider School Lane Charter School - Neshaminy's request that the Neshaminy School District approve an Amendment to its charter to allow School Lane Charter School - Neshaminy to merge with School Lane Charter School and for the Merged entity to hold a Regional Charter from both the Bensalem Township School District and the Neshaminy School District and/or the alternative, School Lane Charter School - Neshaminy's Regional Charter School Application.

Mr. Profy asked if there were any public comment regarding the School Lane Charter School.

Deb Harker, Langhorne, PA stated that she has no affiliation with the School Lane Charter School. She said that it is her understanding that the application as a regional charter application, the seating priorities would be shared between Neshaminy and Bensalem students. She said that since Bensalem students are already on a waiting list, she fears this may disadvantage Neshaminy students from the attaining seating in School Lane Charter School. For this reason, she urged the Board to vote no on the application.

Mr. Profy asked if there is a representative from School Lane Charter School who would like to offer a rebuttal.

The School Lane Charter School representative declined to offer a rebuttal.

Mr. Shubin asked Mr. Profy to clarify that the vote is for the regional charter and does not eliminate School Lane's Charter application.

Mr. Profy stated that the vote is not to revoke the original charter that was previously granted to School Lane Charter.

Motion: Approve the Request of School Lane Charter - Neshaminy

Mr. Profy read the following motion:

Motion is in order to approve the request of School Lane Charter – Neshaminy to amend its existing charter to allow School Lane Charter School – Neshaminy to merge with School Lane Charter School and for the merged entity to hold a regional charter from both the Neshaminy School District and the Bensalem Township School District.

Mr. Congdon made a motion to approve the request of School Lane Charter - Neshaminy.

Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

Mr. Congdon requested a roll call tally and the tally indicated that the motion failed by a vote of zero ayes, and five nays, (Ms. Boyle, Mr. Congdon, Mrs. Cummings, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Shubin.) (Mr. Webb, Mr. Koutsouradis, Mr. Oettinger, and Mr. Sposato were not present.)

Motion: Approve School Lane Charter School - Neshaminy's Application

Mr. Profy read the following motion:

2nd Motion is in order to approve School Lane Charter School – Neshaminy's Application pursuant to Section 1717A of the Charter School Law for a new regional charter school to be known as the School Lane Regional Charter School.

Mr. Congdon made a motion to approve School Lane Charter School - Neshaminy's application.

Ms. Boyle seconded the motion.

Mr. Congdon requested a roll call tally and the tally indicated that the motion failed by a vote of zero ayes, and five nays, (Ms. Boyle, Mr. Congdon, Mrs. Cummings, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Shubin.) (Mr. Webb, Mr. Koutsouradis, Mr. Oettinger, and Mr. Sposato were not present.)

Motion: Prepare Findings of Fact and Conclusions

Mr. Profy read the following motion:

Further direct the Motion is to Neshaminy School District Solicitor to prepare Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law in support of the above motions and is directed to give appropriate notice of the denials to School Lane Charter School – Neshaminy and to take such other action(s) as are necessary to carry these Resolutions/Motions into effect.

Mr. Congdon made a motion to prepare findings of fact and conclusions of law in support of the above motions.

Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

Mr. Congdon requested a roll call tally and the tally indicated that the motion passed by a vote of five ayes, (Ms. Boyle, Mr. Congdon, Mrs. Cummings, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Shubin) and zero nays. (Mr. Webb, Mr. Koutsouradis, Mr. Oettinger, and Mr. Sposato were not present.)

5. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Copeland advised the Board on the Following:

- Three students from Neshaminy High School work accepted into 2013 PSEA 26th annual Touch The Future Student Art Exhibition.
- Maple Point Middle School Presents "The Pirates of Penzance."
- Walter Miller collects \$500 for the homeless shelter "Buck up Bucks County" Campaign.
- Congratulations to Mr. Prendergast, Lower Southampton teacher of the month.
- Congratulations to Neshaminy High School art students, Virginia Anselmi, Jahmeelah Wilson, and Jeff Hackett for their work in photography.
- Jump Rope for Heart event at Hoover Elementary a huge success.
- Ferderbar Elementary hosts Jump Rope for Heart.
- Neshaminy Announces Kindergarten Registration.
- Neshaminy Dance Team presents: New "Dancing with the Faculty" cast announced.
- Herbert Hoover Elementary loves literacy.
- Neshaminy High School presents "Music from the Movies."
- Two outstanding Playwickian writers are winners of the prestigious 2013 Scholastic Keystone Press Awards.

6. Public Comment

Angie Manning, Langhorne, New Jersey Public School teacher, asked after the district spends the money for a new building and upgrades to existing buildings, where will the estimated \$19.9 million needed for additional building repairs and maintenance come from.

Ed Kern, Levittown, retired, commended Mr. Copeland for considering a plan for full-day kindergarten. Mr. Kern noted that while other school districts are allocating additional funds towards security, Neshaminy has eliminated much needed counselors and coordinators, which would help prevent issues from escalating. Mr. Kern said it makes good sense to spend the money on these services rather than build a super-sized elementary school, which would serve only some of the students. He stated that he believes the school consolidation project will unfairly separate students into unequal learning environments - with some students attending brand new schools while other students will attend older, outdated school buildings. Mr. Kern said he is still waiting to hear about what is planned for the buildings that will be closed.

7. Items for Discussion

a) Budget Development

Mrs. Markowitz stated that they are continuing their line by line review of the preliminary budget. An attempt to reconcile the budget is ongoing until June. Any budget savings ideas are welcomed. Please send ideas to savingsideas@neshaminy.k12.pa.us

b) Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

Mrs. Markowitz explained that the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report of the Neshaminy School District is brought to the Board as an informational item. Mrs. Markowitz stated that the report is divided into three sections, introduction, financials, and statistics. The information is presented in a manner that fairly represents the fiscal soundness of the District.

8. Items for Approval at the March 18th Public Board Meeting

a) Joint Termination and Release Agreement with Sunlogics Energy Solutions, LLC

Mr. Copeland stated that Sunlogics Energy Solutions were unable to get their grant, so with mutual agreement, the purchase agreement will end.

b) Bids/budgets transfers

Mrs. Markowitz stated there was one bid 14-09 for classroom and art aid supplies, and one Budget Transfer Report (Working Copy) 13 - 3 for \$2,500.

Bid No. 14-09

Bid Amount: \$26,104.21

Bid Description: Classroom and art supplies for the 2013/2014 school year which include: paints, drawing paper, brushes, markers, yarn, cloth, and other arts and crafts materials for classroom use.

9. Committee Reports

a) Board Policies

Ms. Boyle advised the Board that the next meeting has not yet been scheduled.

b) Educational Development

Mr. Shubin informed the Board that the next meeting is scheduled for March 11th, at 6:00 p.m., and asked Dr. Heble to explain what the meeting will be about.

Dr. Heble stated that the committee will be discussing the integration of instructional technology into classrooms to enhance learning. Elementary, middle and high school will all be represented, and teachers will show the technology that they are using in their classrooms.

c) Finance/Facilities

Mr. Congdon advised the Board that the next meeting is scheduled for March 6th.

d) IU Board

Mrs. Cummings informed the Board that she was unable to attend the last meeting, but left a Board digest of the meeting in every Board member's Board packet.

e) Education Foundation

Mr. Copeland informed the Board that the next meeting has not yet been scheduled. He also stated that the committee was active in Gym Night

f) Technical School

Mr. Morris advised the Board that the next meeting has not yet been set.

g) Technology

Mr. Shubin advised the Board that the date of the next technology has not yet been scheduled.

h) Ad Hoc Facility

Mr. Oettinger was not present.

10. Public Comment

Steve Rodos, Villages of Flowers Mill, retired, asked Mrs. Markowitz to explain the discrepancy between the actual expenses from previous years and the proposed budget cost for Instructional Programs for the current and coming year. He asked if the current years expense is not used, will the excess go into the reserve fund.

Ed Kern, Levittown, retired continued his comment by stating that he believes that Mr. Shubin has provided excellent leadership for the School Consolidation Committee; however, he agrees with another taxpayer that the School Consolidation Committee was only given 2 options to choose from. He concluded by saying that he hopes all the Board members will consider all the issues associated with this project.

Deb Harker, Middletown Township, remarked that she finds it interesting that since the MaST Charter School application was initiated, Neshaminy School District is now considering full-day kindergarten, new

technology and introducing a STEM program. She said she thinks that these programs are only being considered because of competition from MaST and this is a good thing, because competition is needed.

11. Future Topics

None

12. Agenda Development for the March 18th, 2013 Public Board Meeting

None

13. Board Comment

Mrs. Cummings said that a special counselor will be in position until the end of the 2013 school year for crisis prevention. She also remarked that she attended Gym Night and the students and staff did an excellent job.

Mr. Copeland mentioned that data is being collected to present an FAQ section on the website regarding the school consolidation project. Mr. Copeland also remarked that in his last school district full-day kindergarten and a STEM program were an important priority and he is committed to providing these programs in Neshaminy and hopefully the funds will be available to make this a possibility.

Mr. Shubin congratulated the team members of Gym Night for presenting an outstanding show.

Mrs. Markowitz said, in response to Mr. Rodos' question, that the amount budgeted in previous years was a percentage (1%) proposed by the Board to the NFT. The amount for the current year was based on the Council Rock proposal that is now on the table.

Mr. Morris offered his condolences to the family of Kathy Ashmore, a member of the support staff, who recently passed away.

Mr. Congdon urged people to come to the committee meetings and ask their questions so they can be accurately answered at the appropriate time.

14. Adjournment of Meeting

Mr. Shubin moved the meeting be adjourned and Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Congdon adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Jennifer Burns
Board Secretary