

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
January 22, 2013

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on January 22, 2013, in the Harry M. Dengler, Jr., Performing Arts Center at Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Mr. Ritchie Webb, President  
Mr. Scott Congdon, Vice President  
Mrs. Susan Cummings  
Mr. Kim Koutsouradis  
Mr. Mike Morris  
Mr. William Oettinger  
Mr. Mark Shubin  
Mr. Anthony Sposato

**ADMINISTRATORS:**

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

**BOARD MEMBER ABSENT:**

**OTHERS:** Approximately 40 persons from the public, staff and press

**SECRETARY:** Mrs. Jennifer Burns

**SOLICITOR:** Thomas J. Profy, III, Esquire

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Mr. Webb announced that prior to the meeting an Executive Session was held were personnel issues were discussed.

**Call to Order**

Mr. Webb called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

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

**Announcements**

None

**Comprehensive Planning Overview**

Joann Perotti, Director of Strategic Services for the Bucks County Schools Intermediate Unit, gave a presentation slideshow on comprehensive planning overview.

Mr. Shubin asked if this is what has been done with the Intermediate Unit in the past and are there any other districts to which she has provided the same service.

Joann Perotti responding that she has worked with Neshaminy School District in the past and with numerous school districts within the area.

Mr. Shubin asked if it was possible to obtain a copy of the strategic plan for Council Rock as an example.

Joann Perotti said she would forward the information to Mr. Copeland.

**Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Copland advised the Board on the following:

- Neshaminy High School's Business, Computer and Information Technology Department wins Financial Literacy Grant.
- Neshaminy High School presents – "Guys and Dolls", January 30<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> and February 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Neshaminy High School's Interact Club assists Langhorne Rotary's spaghetti dinner.

### **Public Comment**

Carla Quinlisk, Langhorne, educator at a State University, said that more information and alternatives must be considered before any decisions should be made concerning school size and consolidation. Ms. Quinlisk said that research has found that smaller elementary schools help to develop a sense of belongingness, satisfaction, decreased violence, lower drop-out rates and academic achievement. She remarked that the business model for consolidation that was presented weeks ago did not account for certain variables and, therefore, does not present an accurate picture. Ms. Quinlisk also advised the Board to seriously consider the safety of the children before any decisions are made.

Ed Kern, Levittown, retired, referenced a recent newspaper article regarding renovations to Council Rock schools. Mr. Kern noted that the current estimated costs came in about \$1,000,000 over the anticipated cost. He said this often happens with construction costs and he hopes the Board will be cognizant of this. He asked what assurance the Board can give that there will be sufficient funds should estimated costs of consolidation and new renovations be higher than expected in the Neshaminy School District.

Howard Lindner, Langhorne, retired, read an excerpt from the Public Board Meeting Minutes from 2006, in which an individual commented that he was against closing any Neshaminy elementary schools. Mr. Lindner said that now this same person was on the Citizens Advisory Board for the School Consolidation and voted in favor of closing 3 elementary schools.

Stephen Pirritano, Feasterville, self-employed, commented about 2 science teachers, Mr. Elliot and Mr. Suter, who spoke at the last Education Committee meeting and were very enthusiastic about their roles in science education. Mr. Pirritano said it was very inspiring. Mr. Pirritano said he would like to see the Board comment on the teacher development program in the future.

Deb Harker, Middletown Township, stated that she thinks the better charter school choice for Neshaminy is the Mast Charter School. Ms. Harker said School Lane Charter School would be a regional charter school, so Neshaminy would have to share the lottery with Bensalem. She remarked that Mast Charter School would offer robotics beginning at grade 3 as opposed to being offered only in high school. Ms. Harker said parents want a choice and she urged the Board to approve the charter for Mast.

Jim Jenca, Middletown Township, thanked the Board for their hard work. He asked if there are any regulations requiring teachers to be drug tested annually and if not, why this is not required. Mr. Jenca remarked that he is perplexed why the teachers do not stand up against the leaders of their union who are holding up the contract negotiations. He said he has heard that 2/3 of the NFT want to vote for the contract, but they are afraid to stand up against their union leaders in fear of retaliation. Mr. Jenca provided his email address and invited any teacher to contact him with their thoughts and comments. He also asked the Board to pull the offer off the table since the NFT refuses to accept it.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mrs. Burns presented the minutes of November 27, 2012, December 3, 2012 and January 8, 2013. Upon motion of Mr. Oettinger and seconded by Mr. Congdon the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the November 27, 2012, December 3, 2012 and January 8, 2013 Board Meeting Minutes.

### **Solicitor's Report**

Mr. Profy advised the Board on the following:

- Tolling Agreement between Neshaminy School District and Woods Services, Inc.

- The completion of all matters relating to the approval permitting development and construction of Neshaminy High School Additions and Alterations Project.

Mr. Webb made a motion to authorize and approve the Tolling Agreement between the School District and Woods Services, Inc., pertaining to Section 13-1306 Students of the School District at the Woods School.

Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said motion.

Mr. Webb made a motion authorizing and approving the School District instituting and taking such legal action as required to bring to completion all matters relating to the approval permitting development and construction of Neshaminy High School Additions and Alterations Project.

Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said motion.

#### **Approval of Treasurer's Report, Check Register, and Exonerations of Personal and Per Capita Tax**

Mrs. Markowitz presented the following for approval:

- November and December, 2012 Treasurer's Report, subject to audit
- Check Register – November and December, 2012
- Personal and per capita tax exonerations for November and December 2012
- Investment Summary
- Budget Transfer Report (Working Copy) 13-2

Mr. Shubin moved the November and December, 2012 Treasurer's Report be approved, subject to audit, Check Register for November and December, 2012, Investment Summary, the Personal and Per Capita Tax Exonerations for November and December, 2012, and the Budget Transfer Report (Working Copy)- 13 - 2 be approved. Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said reports.

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

Mr. Copeland presented the following for approval:

- Elections – Certified Personnel
- Resignations and Leaves of Absence – Certified Personnel
- Elections – Support Personnel
- Sabbatical Leaves – Support Personnel
- Extra Curricular Staff and Salary Report

Mr. Copeland recommended the approval of the personnel report for certified and support personnel and also stated that there was a candidate that withdrew for the nursing position.

Mrs. Cummings moved the certified and support personnel actions be approved and Mr. Koutsouradis seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said reports.

#### **Motion: School Directors Recognition Month**

Mr. Oettinger presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the role of locally elected school officials has served the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and local communities meeting the needs of public education since the passage of the Free School Act in 1834; and

WHEREAS, these local boards have discharged their responsibilities to public education in a manner which has placed public education in the forefront of our educational systems; and

WHEREAS, locally elected officials have distinguished themselves and their communities in this nonpaid, volunteer public service commitment; and

WHEREAS, the contributions of these men and women should be recognized and appreciated by those who benefit from the workings of our public school system.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors hereby proclaims the month of January as School Director Recognition Month.

Mr. Morris seconded the motion.

Mr. Copeland congratulated and thanked the Board for their tireless service to the community.

The Board unanimously approved said motion.

**Motion: Appointment of Individuals to the Bucks County Technical School**

Mr. Shubin presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the term of certain members serving on the Bucks County Technical School Authority on behalf of the Neshaminy School District have expired; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to appoint individuals to fill these vacancies.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the following individuals are appointed to the Authority as indicated below:

Bucks County Technical School Authority for a Five-year Term:

Michael Binder to 1/6/2018

Rita Geddes to 1/6/2018

Mr. Koutsouradis seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said motion.

**Motion: Approval of the Tax Collector Compensation Program**

Mr. Sposato presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the Neshaminy Board of School Directors is one of three taxing entities that utilizes the services of elected tax collectors for the collection of taxes; and

WHEREAS, the school district is required to establish a compensation plan for elected tax collectors for the four-year term of office that begins in 2014.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the following compensation plan, and other regulations, be adopted as follows in A through D below:

A. Compensation Schedule for the Collection of Real Estate and Per Capita Taxes

Municipality	2014	2015	2016	2017
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Hulmeville Borough	\$4,630	\$4,630	\$4,676	\$4,723
Langhorne Borough	\$4,684	\$4,684	\$4,731	\$4,778
Langhorne Manor Borough	\$4,630	\$4,630	\$4,676	\$4,723
Lower Southampton	\$26,201	\$26,201	\$26,463	\$26,728
Middletown Township	\$55,551	\$55,551	\$56,107	\$56,668
Penndel Borough	\$6,559	\$6,559	\$6,625	\$6,691
TOTAL	\$102,255	\$102,255	\$103,278	\$104,311

B. Compensation for the Collection of Real Estate Taxes Only

Municipality	2014	2015	2016	2017
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Hulmeville Borough	\$2,330	\$2,330	\$2,353	\$2,377
Langhorne Borough	\$2,416	\$2,416	\$2,440	\$2,464
Langhorne Manor Borough	\$2,330	\$2,330	\$2,353	\$2,377
Lower Southampton	\$15,021	\$15,021	\$15,171	\$15,323
Middletown Township	\$30,995	\$30,995	\$31,305	\$31,618
Penndel Borough	\$2,971	\$2,971	\$3,001	\$3,031
TOTAL	\$56,063	\$56,063	\$56,623	\$57,190

Mr. Morris seconded the motion

The Board unanimously approved said motion.

**Motion: Approval of an Agreement of Sale – Eisenhower Building**

Mr. Webb presented the following motion:

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ OF NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT

ADOPTED January 22, 2013

At the meeting of the Board of School Directors of Neshaminy School District ("School District") for which notice was duly given, held on the 22nd day of January, 2013, at the Maple Point Middle School Auditorium, 2250 Langhorne-Yardley Road, Langhorne, Pennsylvania, upon Motion duly made and seconded,

IT IS RESOLVED that the School District enter into the Agreement for Purchase of Real Estate dated January 3, 2013 hereinafter ("the Agreement") for the sale by the School District of that certain lot or tract of ground and the existing structures and buildings located thereon commonly known as Eisenhower Elementary School situate in Middletown Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania and containing fourteen (14) acres more or less along Woodbourne Road being Bucks County Uniform Parcel Identified Tax Parcel No. 22-055-201 to Center for the sum of Two Million Two Hundred Thousand (\$2,200,000.00) Dollars in accordance with and subject to the terms and conditions of the Agreement, which is attached hereto and incorporated into this Resolution.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Solicitor of the School District are hereby authorized and directed on behalf of the School District and under its corporate seal or otherwise to execute the Agreement for Purchase of Real Estate and such other

documents and other affidavits and to take such further actions as may be necessary or desirable to effectuate the Agreement and intent of this Resolution, and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Solicitor of the School District are hereby authorized and directed to petition the Court of Common Pleas of Bucks County for approval of the Agreement in accordance with and subject to the conditions set forth in Section 707 of the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, and within the time provided and conditions contained in the Agreement.

This Resolution adopted this 22nd day of January, 2013.

ATTEST:

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Burns, Secretary

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Ritchie Webb, President

Mr. Shubin seconded the motion.

Mr. Morris asked what the money from the Eisenhower real-estate sale could be used for.

Mr. Webb stated it could be used for capital improvements.

Mr. Morris asked for assurance that it would not be used towards a CBA.

Mr. Webb replied that it would not.

The Board unanimously approved said motion.

#### **Federal Programs**

Mr. Copeland advised the Board that the total amount for Federal Grants is \$1,686,082.00.

#### **Other Board Business**

None

#### **Public Comment**

Carla Quinlisk, Langhorne, educator, read a summary from the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration report on school size and student performance. The report concluded that school size had a negative significant effect on student achievement for schools that had more than 800 elementary students. She said that schools with less than 400 students are more likely to have teachers develop relationships with the students resulting in the students performing at higher levels.

Howard Lindner, Langhorne, retired, implied that Mr. Shubin is against a referendum because he does not want the school consolidation to be rejected by the public.

Stephen Pirritano, Feasterville, self-employed, remarked that the study on consolidation actually pays for itself. Mr. Pirritano asked if Policy 811 will be discussed at the next Policy Meeting on January 30, 2013. He also called for an update on the unsettled items in the proposed contract. Mr. Pirritano stated that if the NFT wants to use the district's equipment for printing and copying then they should be paying for the supplies used.

Jim Jenca, Levittown, retired, said the offer from the Board to the NFT is excessively generous and if the NFT does not vote on it then the offer should be pulled.

Kim Radovitch, Middletown, kitchen designer, urged the Board to approve the charter for the Mast Charter School.

**Board Comment**

Mr. Koutsouradis expressed his sadness and disappointment for the personal attack against Mr. Shubin by a commenter. Mr. Koutsouradis said that Mr. Shubin and the entire Ad Hoc committee have been doing an exceptional job and he thanked him for his service.

Mr. Sposato assured the public that the Board is doing everything possible to make sure that they do not exceed the budget for the consolidation project.

Mrs. Cummings asked Mr. Copeland for an update on the school safety issue.

Mr. Copeland said he and Mr. Minotti have met with the Emergency Outreach Group from the Police/Fire Department to schedule training exercises. Also, Bucks County will perform a survey of all Neshaminy security issues.

Mrs. Cummings asked Mr. Copeland if the Board members are invited to Challenge Day.

Mr. Copeland said he will see that the Board members are extended invitations to Challenge Day.

Mrs. Cummings asked Mrs. Markowitz to elaborate on the bus issue in the packet.

Mrs. Markowitz said it is a lease/purchase proposal to obtain an additional 20 busses for the district.

Mr. Shubin said the plan that was submitted by the consulting organization is an opportunity to reduce costs. He stated that new ideas have been developed by architectural designs regarding new school construction, which enables the "small school" experience inside the larger school environment. He encouraged those concerned with this issue to research the newer design ideas. Mr. Shubin said this opportunity to reduce costs will provide the district with additional funds that can be used towards educational programs, which will benefit the students by improving education.

Mr. Oettinger stated that the final proposal is still on the table with multiple issues still at large. He said the Board will do what it takes to hopefully come to a resolution soon.

Mr. Webb said there is no drug provision in the proposal at this time. He said as long as the NFT is still willing to negotiate they will still continue in good faith.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Shubin moved the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Congdon seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Webb adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Burns  
Board Secretary