

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
January 28, 2014

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on January 28, 2014, in the District Board Room, at Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Mr. Scott E. Congdon, President  
Ms. Irene Boyle, Vice President  
Mr. John Allen  
Mrs. Susan Cummings  
Mr. Mike Morris  
Mr. Stephen Pirritano  
Mr. Ron Rudy  
Mr. Mark Shubin  
Mr. Anthony Sposato

**ADMINISTRATORS:**

Mr. Robert L. Copeland  
Mrs. Barbara Markowitz  
Mr. Anthony Devlin  
Mrs. Theresa Hinterberger  
Dr. Gloria Hancock  
Mr. Don Harm

**BOARD MEMBER ABSENT:**

**OTHERS:** Approximately 75 persons from the public, staff and press

**SECRETARY:** Mrs. Jennifer Burns

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

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**Call to Order**

Mr. Congdon called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

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

**Announcements**

None

**Public Comment**

Kevin Gallagher, software developer, resident of Middletown Township, remarked that he would like the Board to seriously consider the application of John Allen to fill the recently vacated seat. He said Mr. Allen would make a great addition to the Board.

Mr. Profy framed the motion for the appointment of election of a new Board member to fill vacant seat in Region 2.

**Motion: Election of a New Board Member to Fill Vacant Seat in Region 2**

Mr. Morris presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, Board Member Ritchie Webb's resignation effective January 6, 2014 created a vacancy on the Neshaminy Board of School Directors in Region 2; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to appoint an applicant to fill his term which expires November 2015.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that after considering qualified applicants, the Neshaminy Board of School Directors elects Mr. Robert Feather to fill the unexpired term of Ritchie Webb.

Mr. Profy amended the motion to read, the term of Office should expire the first Monday of November, 2015.

Mr. Rudy seconded the motion.

Mr. Congdon requested a roll call vote and the roll call tally indicated that the motion failed by a vote of 3 ayes, (Ms. Boyle, Mr. Morris and Mr. Rudy) and 5 nays, (Mr. Congdon, Mrs. Cummings, Mr. Pirritano, Mr. Shubin, and Mr. Sposato.)

**Motion: Election of a New Board Member to Fill Vacant Seat in Region 2**

Mr. Shubin presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, Board Member Ritchie Webb's resignation effective January 6, 2014 created a vacancy on the Neshaminy Board of School Directors in Region 2; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to appoint an applicant to fill his term which expires first Monday in December 2015.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that after considering qualified applicants, the Neshaminy Board of School Directors elects Mr. John Allen to fill the unexpired term of Ritchie Webb.

Mr. Pirritano seconded the motion.

Mr. Congdon requested a roll call vote and the roll call tally indicated that the motion passed by a vote of 5 ayes, (Mr. Congdon, Mrs. Cummings, Mr. Pirritano, Mr. Shubin, and Mr. Sposato) and 3 nays, (Ms. Boyle, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Rudy.)

The loyalty of oath of office was administered to Mr. John Allen by District Justice Daniel Baranoski.

**Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Copland advised the Board on the following:

- Full Day Kindergarten Highlight - Mrs. Crisp and students from Lower Southampton Elementary School and Mrs. Schaeffer and students from Pearl Buck Elementary School gave a presentation on what they are learning in full day kindergarten.
- Mr. Damien Dipentino commented briefly on how rewarding his experience as a full day kindergarten classroom aide has been.
- Mr. Copeland gave a power point presentation on his mid-year report on the state of education in Neshaminy.

**Public Comment**

Angie Manning, New Jersey public school teacher, resident of Middletown Township, expressed her appreciation for the kindergarten presentation and asked what plan will be put into action in order to bring the half-day kindergarten children up to the same level as the full-day children. Ms. Manning also suggested that one elementary school could be closed and the students from the closed school could be relocated to other schools in the district.

Ed Kern, retired, resident of Levittown, said he enjoyed the kindergarten presentation and hopes to see full-day kindergarten implemented throughout the district next year. Mr. Kern said if the full-day kindergarten is put into service the number of empty seats in the elementary schools would lessen and the need to close elementary schools would no longer apply.

Reed Hennessy, High School student, resident of Langhorne, requested that the district look into the possibility of forming a Junior ROTC program at Neshaminy. He said it would instill values and pride in the community and our country for the students. Mr. Hennessy added that by being in the Junior ROTC program, it is not necessary to enlist in the armed forces.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mrs. Burns presented the minutes of November 19, 2013, December 2, 2013, and January 14, 2014 Board minutes. Upon motion of Mr. Congdon and seconded by Mr. Sposato, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of November 19, 2013, December 2, 2013, and January 14, 2014 Board minutes.

**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, 2013 Treasurer's Report, subject to audit
- Check Register – November and December, 2013
- Personal and per capita tax exonerations for November and December, 2013
- Investments
- Budget Transfer Report (Working Copy) - 14-3

Mr. Shubin moved the November and December, 2013, Treasurer's Report be approved, subject to audit, Check Register for November and December, 2013, the Personal and Per Capita Tax Exonerations for November and December, 2013, Investments, and Budget Transfer Report (Working Copy) - 14-3 be approved.

Ms. Boyle seconded the motion.

Mr. Shubin asked if it is anticipated that money will be needed from the reserve fund from this year's budget.

Mrs. Markowitz stated that will be better determined by the end of March.

Mr. Pirritano asked if the per capita tax exonerations increase every year.

Mrs. Markowitz responded that it stays relatively the same.

Mr. Pirritano asked if the amount to Wood Services was for Neshaminy students exclusively.

Mr. Copeland stated that it was monies collected from other districts and paid to Wood Services.

Mr. Pirritano asked if the building financial funds are controlled by individual building principals.

Mrs. Markowitz explained that each fund is controlled by two advisors from each building and subject to audit.

The Board unanimously approved said reports by a vote of 9 ayes and 0 nays.

**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 – Certified Personnel
- Extra Curricular Staff and Salary Report

Mr. Copeland recommended the approval of the Personnel Report for Certified and Support Personnel and the Extra Curricular Staff and Salary Report.

Mr. Sposato moved the Certified and Support Personnel Reports and the Extra Curricular Staff and Salary Report be approved. Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said reports by a vote of 9 ayes and 0 nays.

**Motion: School Director Recognition Month - January 2014**

Ms. Boyle 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. Pirritano seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said motion by a vote of 9 ayes and 0 nays.

**Motion: Appointment of Individual to School Authority**

Mrs. Cummings presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the term of a certain member on the Authority presently serving the Neshaminy School District has expired; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to appoint an individual to fill this vacancy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the following individual is appointed to the Authority listed below:

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

Kevin Yeingst to 1/5/19

Mr. Rudy seconded the motion.

Mr. Morris asked how is the Technical School Board authority associated with the school district and the technical school.

Mr. Profy stated the Lower Bucks Technical School Authority is the entity, which owns the land and building that is leased to the technical school.

The Board unanimously approved said motion by a vote of 8 ayes, 0 nays, and 1 abstention, (Mr. Allen).

**Motion: District Level Steering Committee Planning Team**

Mr. Rudy presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the Neshaminy School District is required to submit a Comprehensive Plan to the Pennsylvania Department of Education; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with legislative requirements, the District must have a District Level Steering Committee Planning Team.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors approve the attached list of team members to comprise the required Steering Committee.

Mr. Shubin seconded the motion.

Mr. Copeland remarked that there may be additional names added to the team in the near future.

Mr. Profy affirmed that the additions would be acceptable.

The Board unanimously approved said motion by a vote of 9 ayes and 0 nays.

**Motion: Acceptance of 2012- 2013 Audit Report**

Mr. Shubin presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the audit for the Neshaminy School District for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2013, has been prepared by Maillie, LLP.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Audit Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2013, be accepted in accordance with Section 24-2408 of the School Code.

Mr. Pirritano seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said motion by a vote of 9 ayes and 0 nays.

**Motion: Proposed Preliminary 2014 - 2015 Budget**

Mr. Pirritano presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, in accordance with Act 1 of 2006, the Board of School Directors has received a Proposed Preliminary Budget for the 2014-15 fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, the School District did on January 17, 2014 publish a Notice of Intent to Adopt Proposed Preliminary Budget of School District as required by Act 1 2006 of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, in order to further comply with the Pennsylvania Department of Education interpretation of Act 1 of 2006, the Board of School Directors must adopt a Proposed Preliminary Budget.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2014-15 Proposed Preliminary Budget is adopted in accordance with Act 1 of 2006 and it shall be made available for public inspection beginning January 29, 2014, as required by law.

Mr. Shubin seconded the motion.

Mr. Shubin asked Mrs. Markowitz to explain the process for the benefit of the public.

Mrs. Markowitz explained it's the first of four approvals as it gets closer to approving the final budget.

Mr. Shubin asked what PSERS obligation was for this year's budget.

Mrs. Markowitz stated that PSERS did increase to 21.4%, which would be \$3.6 million dollars at this time.

The Board unanimously approved said motion by a vote of 9 ayes and 0 nays.

**Federal Programs**

Mrs. Markowitz advised the Board that the total amount of Federal Grants is \$1,585,039.

**Solicitor's Report**

Mr. Profy presented the following:

Recommendations to settle pending 2012 - 2014 Tax Year Assessment Appeals of Statesman Health Re 2, LP, as follows:

**Statesman Health Re 2, LP**

**Settlement Assessment**

Tax Map Parcel 22-051-286-002	\$463,300.00 - 2012 Tax Year Assessment
	\$442,800.00 - 2013 Tax Year Assessment
	\$451,000.00 - 2014 Tax Year Assessment

and that all prior Board actions taken with respect to said 2012- 2014 Tax Year Assessments, if any, are herewith repealed and rescinded.

Mr. Sposato made a motion to accept Mr. Profy's recommendation.

Mr. Morris seconded the motion.

Mr. Shubin asked what impact it would have to the district's revenue in total.

Mr. Profy stated for the 2012 year it would be \$10,000 and for the 2013 year, it would be \$13,000. Going forward, it would be approximately \$12,000 per year annual reduction.

The Board unanimously approved said motion by a vote of 9 ayes and 0 nays.

Mr. Profy presented the following:

Recommendation to settle pending 2012 - 2014 Tax Year Assessment Appeals of Paris Real Estate, LP, as follows:

**Paris Real Estate, LP**

**Settlement Assessment**

Tax Map Parcel 22-021-266-002	\$400,000.00 - 2012 Tax Year Assessment
	\$421,800.00 - 2013 Tax Year Assessment
	\$528,000.00 - 2014 Tax Year Assessment

and that all prior Board actions taken with respect to said 2012 - 2014 Tax Year Assessment, if any are herewith repealed and rescinded.

Mr. Sposato made a motion to accept Mr. Profy's recommendation.

Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

Mr. Shubin asked what impact it would have to the district's revenue in total.

Mr. Profy responded for the first year it would be \$25,000, and for the second year it would be \$22,000, and for the third year, going forward, it would be \$5,675.

The Board unanimously approved said motion by a vote of 9 ayes and 0 nays.

**Other Board Business**

Mr. Pirritano made a motion to give Mr. Copeland the authority to conduct an evaluation study regarding student population, in light of the fact that full-day kindergarten was not included in the original study. The cost of the study is not to exceed \$5,000.

Ms. Boyle seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said motion by a vote of 9 ayes and 0 nays.

Mr. Congdon stated that after meeting with State Representative, Frank Farry and guidance from Mr. Copeland, Board liaisons will be set up with State Officials to better communicate Neshaminy's questions and concerns with state related issues. This will bring our issues directly to the officials who can help, as well as, give Neshaminy firsthand knowledge of a legislature being worked on in Harrisburg that may affect this district as we move forward. Frank Farry has agreed to meet monthly with the liaisons and Superintendent Copeland and discuss these issues and agreed to research the issues as needed. These will be face to face meetings. Representation from Senator Tomlinson's office will also attend these meetings. We will be reaching out to the three other State Representatives that cover our district and will be inviting them and we hope they will attend as well. Mrs. Cummings and Mr. Shubin have agreed to be the Board's liaisons.

Mr. Morris asked if the Board has to have consensus on whether they are in favor of the committee.

Mr. Profy responded that the Board President has the authority to develop such a committee. It is a committee of meeting and discussion and no action will be taken.

Mr. Morris asked if this committee would be on the committee list when the Board reorganizes.

Mr. Congdon stated yes.

Mr. Morris made a motion to have Ellis Katz immediately start drafting a policy on contraband sweeps, of vehicles, on school property, employee vehicles, contractors, consultants, vendors, subcontractors, paid or unpaid that are on school district property.

Mr. Rudy seconded the motion.

Ms. Boyle stated that in past procedures, the Board would make a consensus that the policy committee would take it up and then the policy committee would bring it back to the Board for a vote.

Mr. Sposato asked Mr. Profy what would be appropriate.

Mr. Profy stated that the policy committee would generate a policy and then the policy would be reviewed by the Board and acted upon.

Ms. Boyle stated that whenever there was a legal question, the policy committee would invite legal counsel so that they could advise the committee and then the policy would be written and brought to the Board.

Mr. Shubin, Mr. Pirritano, Mr. Sposato all agreed that this should go through the proper steps of the policy committee first.

Mr. Congdon called for a roll call vote and the roll call tally indicated that the motion failed by a vote of 1 aye, (Mr. Morris), 6 nays, (Mrs. Cummings, Mr. Rudy, Mr. Shubin, Mr. Sposato, and Mr. Allen) and 2 abstentions, (Mr. Congdon and Mr. Pirritano.) Mr. Congdon abstained for the reason being that before making a decision he would like to get an estimate on the project. Mr. Pirritano abstained for the reasons stated previously.

**Public Comment**

Steve Rodos, Villages of Flowers Mill, thanked Mr. Copeland for the presentation on full-day kindergarten and urged the Board to make full-day kindergarten district wide for every student. He also urged the Board to work together with Mr. Copeland to put into effect the programs Mr. Copeland outlined. Mr. Rodos suggested at least one elementary school be closed by September 1st and to get the GIS population study and figure out a redistricting plan based on the current trends.

Leeann Hartpence, homemaker, resident of Langhorne, stated she was delighted watching the full-day kindergarten students and is encouraged that we can expand upon this without any additional costs to the district. She was very impressed with Mr. Copeland's presentation and hasn't seen this much progress in many years. Ms. Hartpence said that she is pro consolidation and believes it is time to move forward. Ms. Hartpence asked when the small committee dates were and when our NESPA contract comes to a close.

Molly Calliopes, resident of Langhorne, stated she was on the consolidation committee and that it has been over a year since they have submitted their recommendations to the Board and still nothing has been done and money has been lost. Ms. Calliopes asked when a decision is going to be made.

Ms. Bakshi, resident of Langhorne, asked if the 8th grade language program will be brought back next school year.

Reed Hennessy, High School student, resident of Langhorne, stated that the instructors must be three years retired from the Army. Mr. Hennessy said that the ROTC program motivates students to be better citizens and role models.

Jane Sipple, resident of Middletown, thanked Mr. Copeland for his support of full-day kindergarten and voiced her support for full-day kindergarten also so that every student will have the same opportunity.

Almando Carrasquillo, private investigator, resident of Langhorne, urged the Board to continue the full-day kindergarten program for every student. He stated that he is in favor for seniors doing their senior projects on community service. He also said that it's a great way for the school to build a relationship with people who pay taxes but do not have a vested interest because they don't have children enrolled in school.

Raina Shumaker, part-time sales, resident of Langhorne, asked if there is a plan put in place for those students who weren't in full-day kindergarten that may not be up to the same level as those who were.

**Board Comment**

Mr. Sposato thanked Bob Feather for being willing to take on this responsibility and also congratulated Mr. Allen and welcomed him to the Board.

Mr. Pirritano congratulated Mr. Allen and also thanked Mr. Feather. He thanked Mr. Copeland for his presentation and asked him to talk with Dr. McGee about Mr. Hennessy's request for the ROTC. He stated that any information will be posted regarding the consolidation and GIS study on Neshaminy Update and Neshaminy Parent's Action websites.

Mr. Shubin stated that Neshaminy is turning the corner and bringing new ideas and thinking to Neshaminy.

Mrs. Cummings thanked the students for their presentation on full-day kindergarten and also thanked Mr. Copeland for his presentation. She also welcomed Mr. Allen. Mrs. Cummings said she hopes to work with Dr. McGee on the request for ROTC. Mrs. Cummings read an article in the Philadelphia Inquirer about Langhorne Borough being a place where families move into and rarely want to leave.

Ms. Boyle welcomed Mr. Allen and thanked Mr. Copeland for his presentation. She stated that the next policy committee will be February 26th.

Mr. Pirritano thanked the Booster's and supporters of the Neshaminy football team. He also thanked the Lions' Club for all their participation.

Mr. Copeland stated they will take a look at the Army club. He said the GA study is on the way. The NESPA contract ends July 1, 2014. Mr. Copeland said that there has always been a split with full-day kindergarten but they will take the different experiences and implement what needs to be done for the students. He said that they are looking at 6th and 7th grade double language arts. He said that they will be talking about new senior projects for incoming freshmen.

Mr. Allen thanked everyone for welcoming him and he is looking forward to working with the Board and making Neshaminy a better place.

Mr. Congdon stated that the Board will be looking into the ROTC program. He asked that anyone seeking the true numbers concerning the consolidation should come to the Ad Hoc meeting. Mr. Congdon stated there were two great candidates for the open Board position and he thanked both candidates. He also thanked the kindergarten students for their presentation.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Congdon moved the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Sposato seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Condon adjourned the meeting at 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Burns  
Board Secretary