

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

SPECIAL PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
(PUBLIC MEETING)  
October 24, 2006

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on October 24, 2006, in the Board Room of the Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Mr. Richard M. Eccles, President  
Mrs. Sue C. Barrett, Vice President  
Mr. Joseph R. Blasch  
Mr. Jason Bowman  
Ms. Irene M. Boyle  
Mr. Frank J. Koziol  
Dr. William H. Spitz  
Mr. Ritchie Webb

**ADMINISTRATORS:**

Mr. Paul J. Kadri  
Dr. Louis T. Muenker  
Dr. Sandra Costanzo  
Mr. Joseph V. Paradise  
Ms. Jacqueline Rattigan

**BOARD MEMBER NOT PRESENT:**

Mrs. Susan Cummings

**SOLICITOR:**

Thomas Profy, IV, Esquire

**SECRETARY:**

Mrs. Anita E. Walls

**OTHERS:** Approximately 14 persons from the public, staff and press

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**Call to Order**

Mr. Eccles called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

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

**Announcements**

No announcements.

**Public Comment**

Mr. Steve Rodos, Villages of Flowers Mill, Langhorne, PA, stated that he understands that the budget will be prepared earlier this year than in the past years due to the results of the Tax Commission Study. Two programs which Mr. Rodos would like to see instituted by Neshaminy School District. They are full day kindergarten and the use of the school buildings for all students' education in an expanded school year. If not all the students, but at least the special education students should have the benefit of a year round education. This is not just beneficial for the special education students, but would be beneficial for all other students. Mr. Rodos noted that other school districts do not provide full day kindergarten or year round school. Neshaminy could be the standard bearer if the district started to think outside the box and think for the best interests of the students.

**Student Representative Report**

Miss Stephanie Esposito, Student Council Historian, provided the following report:

- Homecoming took place two weeks ago. Football team won.
- Golf/Field Hockey won Suburban One League Championships.
- Soccer in playoffs.
- Cross Country Boys/Girls had SOL's last week and District's this week.
- Band won its first competition with Outstanding scores.

- Kaleidoscope of Bands will be held on October 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.
- The fall Genre will take place on November 16, 17 and 18.
- Power Puff will be held on November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Mr. Eccles noted that it has been the practice of the Board to allow the Student Representatives to leave the meeting and attend to their homework. Mr. Eccles thanked Ms. Esposito for her time.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Kadri stated that the PSBA has sent a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of Richard M. Eccles in honor of his eight (8) years of service as a Board member. The certificate attempts to recognize years of dedicated service to the children, community and public education.

Mr. Kadri thanked all who attended the Neshaminy Education Foundation Dinner Dance. The night was a huge success!

Mr. Kadri stated that at the last board meeting the Board provided consensus to submit an RFP for a long range facilities plan and Mr. Kadri noted that the process is in progress and will be brought back to committee in mid November.

Mr. Kadri advised that the Tax Study Commission is in the process of meeting. Mr. Kadri noted that the last meeting is being rebroadcasted on Neshaminy T.V. and a presentation that was provided from Public Finance Management provided details of the decision to be made. Mr. Kadri strongly urged the public to review the rebroadcast and to take part in a public meeting at which time the Commission will entertain comments from the community. The meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on November 9<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Kadri provided Board members with a handout regarding Technology. Mr. Kadri wanted to make the Board aware of the distinction between the Technology group that works in the central office and constructional technology which may take place in various forms within the school. Mr. Kadri stated that the graphic shows three distinct areas in which the district needs to focus. Infrastructure, Public Good/Public Safety and Student Achievement/Instruction. Infrastructure represents consistency. The district needs to have standards, Acceptable Use Policies, availability, access and capabilities. That supports everything that takes place. Public Good/Public Safety relates to safety. How the district communicates and how urgent messages are broadcast and how the public is kept informed. Safety protects students, but maintains data in a safe environment so it cannot be accessed by individuals who should not have such access. The district is part of the larger community and the district should be always looking for community partnerships. Student Achievement/Instruction is the final area and the central office technology group creates innovation. There is a distinction between innovative technology and creating the fertile ground in which innovation takes place in the classroom. Mr. Kadri noted that it is not necessary for the district to have the fastest, leading edge technology. The district strives to create the fertile ground in which innovation can grow. So that when an idea stems from a classroom or school hopefully the district will have created the infrastructure so that the innovation can take place and we are not going to the teacher and saying that it is a good idea, hopefully in a few years we can do same.

Mr. Kadri envisions the Technology Department within the central office acting in a consulting role with the rest of the system.

Mr. Kadri advised Board members that at the last meeting he made a recommendation for the district to make a server purchase. It was the Board's recommendation that the matter go to Committee. Mr. Kadri advised that he would like the Board to take a vote for the purchase of the servers.

Mr. Koziol provided the following statement:

“Most of our children today come to school exposed to televisions, MTV, Ipods, stereos, mpeg players, video games, hi-speed Internet connections, and video game machines. They communicate with each other

constantly using IM's, eMail and cell phones either orally or with text messages. They have developed their own language of acronyms. They download movies, they upload profiles. They not only keep up with events in this country they verify news by reading reports from foreign countries. They store their spread sheets and notes on Google. Tomorrow is Internet 2, the cave, 3 dimensional graphics, holographs, etc. Computers today have become the family entertainment center.

Recognizing this, one of my original goals when I joined the Board was to try to help make Neshaminy number one in Technology. I believe the use of Computer Technology is no longer a luxury in a school, it is a necessity. Without question, providing the necessary technology to our students is the Board's responsibility and commitment.

However, there are two things about technology that are consistent:

- 1) It is relentlessly changing. Every 18 months there are changes in hardware, operating systems, software, etc.
- 2) It is a very expensive proposition to stay on the leading edge.

Therefore, since we are spending taxpayers' dollars to provide this ever changing service we have to recognize in order to keep current technology in the school you must have a plan that consistently provides a portion of affordable, new technology annually.

My most important concern is our children and what/how they would be using this technology. I believe the purchase of 1100 desktop computers this year for \$800,000 helped solve part of the deficiencies that was identified by the technology department. However, I am not in favor of replacing the servers at this time for \$400,000 since at least 50% of them are still under warranty. I do not recommend that we replace our Gigabit network with another Gigabit network at this time for approximately \$1M.

I do believe that we must have a plan to systematically replace all equipment at a steady pace.

Some may call the questioning of a total potential expenditure of \$1.4M as micro-managing; I call it doing my job."

Mr. Koziol advised that at this time he cannot vote for the proposition to purchase new servers.

Mr. Webb's concern is that the district would be purchasing new servers to replace servers that are only two to three years old. In a few years they will be 2-3 years old and will the district need to replace them at that time. Mr. Webb stated that Mr. Koziol makes a good point and do this process in steps. Other districts also have plans in place to do the same thing. Everyone on the Board believes that Neshaminy should have the best. The concern is that the district is buying things that we already have and that do not need to be purchased at this specific time. Financially, it is better to stagger the costs. Mr. Webb advised that he will also vote "No."

Mr. Blasch advised that he feels the same way and does not feel that the district should be replacing servers that are only 2-3 years of age. Mr. Blasch feels it would be better for the district if it were done in increments. Mr. Blasch will also be voting "No."

Dr. Spitz commented that for those who attended the committee meeting the Administration made an extremely strong case for following the path. Dr. Spitz does not believe that the Administration has any desire to throw away good equipment for the sake of buying brand new. This is not the purpose. A great majority of the servers are over 4 years old. Dr. Spitz noted that different individuals have different ideas on advancing technology. Dr. Spitz strongly believes that the district's IT director's approach which is supported by the Superintendent, who has a strong technology background, is also a very valid approach. This money is in the budget and the Board approved a four year plan for Technology last spring. Dr. Spitz believes that the Board needs to support the Administration on this request. Neshaminy has been behind the curve on technology for

years. This request is a valid and cost effective way to move Neshaminy forward. Dr. Spitz urged all Board members to support the Administration.

Mr. Bowman agrees with Dr. Spitz. Mr. Denton has not been with the district for a long time; however, he has filled a void within the district. Mr. Denton has put a long term plan in place; he has spoken with the staff and Administration. He is well regarded as a person and professional. Mr. Bowman noted that everyone needs to support the recommendation and give teachers the tools they need to educate. Mr. Bowman supports the Administration one hundred percent.

Mr. Eccles noted that the Board, community and district have set lofty goals. Those demands have been placed upon the Superintendent and Administrators. The Board cannot handcuff them at this point. One of the nice things about having nine members on the Board is that we can disagree.

This district needs to move forward. Mr. Eccles stated that he has full confidence in Mr. Kadri and his goals. We cannot be a hindrance to the goals. Mr. Eccles supports the Administration in this matter. It is imperative that this district do everything that it can over the next few years to get the most out of the students, faculty and facilities to achieve the district's goals.

The Board is required to purchase the servers from Dell as recommended by the Technology Committee.

Mr. Eccles requested a roll call vote on the purchase of new servers for the district. The roll call tally indicated the purchase was approved by a vote of five ayes Mrs. Barrett, Mr. Bowman, Ms. Boyle, Mr. Eccles, Dr. Spitz and three nays Mr. Blasch, Mr. Koziol and Mr. Webb with one absent board member, Mrs. Cummings.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Mrs. Walls presented the minutes of the September 26, 2006 public meeting. Upon motion of Mr. Bowman and seconded by Ms. Boyle, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the September 26, 2006. Mrs. Cummings was not present.

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

Mr. Paradise presented the following for approval:

- September, 2006 Treasurer's Reports, subject to audit
- Check Register – September, 2006
- New Investments for Approval
- Personal and Per Capita Tax Exonerations – September, 2006 with 1737 requests for exonerations

Mr. Bowman moved the September, 2006 Treasurer's Reports, subject to audit, Check Registers for September, 2006, New Investments for Approval and Personal and Per Capita Tax Exonerations for the month of September, 2006. Mr. Blasch seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the Treasurer's Reports, subject to audit, check registers, and investments. Mrs. Cummings was not present.

#### **Bids**

Mr. Paradise presented the following bids for approval:

#### **Bid No. 07-14 Poquessing Auditorium Lighting Upgrade**

Bid Amount: \$276,000

The bid is for new lights to stage area for performances and new house lights added so that the area can be better utilized as classroom space during the school day. This was a capital improvement and was included in

the original list of projects for the Capital Improvement Bond Issue and was delayed because of the Poquessing renovations.

**Bid No. 07-17 Musical Instruments**

Bid Amount: \$22,024.59

The bid is for musical instruments and accessories for K-12 instruction throughout the district.

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

The Board unanimously approved the bids. Mrs. Cummings was not present.

**Certified and Support Personnel Reports**

Mr. Kadri presented the following for approval:

- Elections of Certified Personnel
- Resignations/Leaves of Certified Personnel
- Elections of Support Personnel
- Resignations/Leaves of Support Personnel

Mr. Kadri noted that the 2006/07 recommended additional Extra-Curricular staff and salaries was also presented for approval.

Dr. Spitz moved the personnel report be accepted. Mr. Koziol seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the personnel report. Mrs. Cummings was not present.

**Motion: American Education Week**

Mr. Bowman presented the following motion:

**WHEREAS, public schools are the backbone of our democracy, providing young people with the tools they need to maintain our nation's precious values of freedom, civility, and equality; and,**

**WHEREAS, by equipping young Americans with both practical skills and broader intellectual abilities, public schools give them hope for, and access to, a productive future; and,**

**WHEREAS, public education employees, be they substitute educators, custodians, teachers, bus drivers or librarians, work tirelessly to serve our children and communities with care and professionalism; and,**

**WHEREAS, public schools are community catalysts, bringing together adults and children, educators and volunteers, business leaders and elected officials in a common enterprise;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors hereby proclaims November 12 – 18, 2006, as the 85<sup>th</sup> annual observance of American Education Week.**

Mrs. Barrett seconded the motion.

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

Mrs. Barrett inquired whether there would be public visitation. Mrs. Rattigan advised that families and community are invited to visit the schools during that time. Pamphlets have been distributed.

**Motion: Contracted Transportation Services for 2006-07**

Ms. Boyle presented the following motion:

**WHEREAS, the school district transports public, private and parochial school students in accordance with the applicable state laws; and**

**WHEREAS, private contractors are sometimes used if it is more practical and less expensive to do so with other than district vehicles.**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors authorizes the school district to enter into private contracts for the 2006-07 school year for the transportation of certain students in accordance with state regulations as follows:**

Contract #06-07-02	Lakeside Educational Network	\$26,862
Contract #06-07-01	Middle Earth, Incorporated	\$95,867
	<b>Total:</b>	<b><u>\$122,729</u></b>

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Business Administrator is authorized to sign these contracts on behalf of the school district.**

Mr. Bowman seconded the motion.

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

**Motion: Neshaminy High School Site Development Agreement**

Mr. Eccles presented the following motion:

**WHEREAS, the School District is proceeding with the Project designated as Additions and Alterations to the Neshaminy High School, Pennsylvania Department of Education, Project No. 3215 ("Project"); and**

**WHEREAS, the Township of Middletown has issued to the School District the Building Permits and other permits required for the demolition and construction required for the Project; and**

**WHEREAS, the School District has awarded the Construction Contracts for the Project; and**

**WHEREAS, the School District and Township of Middletown have entered into an Agreement dated June 6, 2006, pertaining to the Project, which provides, inter alia, that the School District and the Township of Middletown will enter into a Site Development Agreement for the Project; and**

**WHEREAS, the School District and Township of Middletown intend and desire to enter into a Site Development Agreement pertaining to the land development approvals for the Project in the form annexed to this Resolution as Exhibit "A".**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the School District approves and authorizes entry into the Site Development Agreement by and between the School District and Township of Middletown, annexed hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit "A" and that the Officers of the School District are hereby expressly authorized and directed to execute said Site Development Agreement for the Project and to execute such other documents and to take such other action as may be required in connection with or relating to said Site Development Agreement for the Project.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Officers of the School District are hereby authorized and directed to execute such other instruments and documents and to perform such other acts as said Officers at their discretion deem necessary or desirable to effectuate the Site Development Agreement and the intent of this Resolution and to consummate the Project, including the designation of the taking of necessary or desirable acts or actions to Administrators of the School District as permitted by law.**

Mr. Webb seconded the motion.

Mrs. Barrett requested Mr. Profy to speak to the Board regarding said motion.

Mr. Profy advised that the Site Development Agreement addresses Temporary Certificates of Occupancy, Maintenance Bonds; engineering issues can be resolved without the loss of the Occupancy certificate. Mr. Profy also advised that the agreement provides a paragraph that the timing of the submission of the final plan to the Township will be extended in order to permit PennDOT to review the design for the Highway Occupancy Permit to address the issue of improvements to Old Lincoln Highway. Mr. Profy further advised that the agreement provides that there will be no posting of financial security.

Mr. Eccles advised that this agreement will also be voted upon tonight at Middletown Township. Dr. Muenker and Mr. Minotti are representing the district at the Township meeting.

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

#### **Federal Programs**

Mr. Kadri stated that the total amount of grants to date is \$2,066,838.

#### **Other Board Business**

Dr. Spitz had a question regarding the Executive Summary provided in the monthly progress report from Reynolds Construction regarding the high school construction project. Dr. Spitz noted a \$3.2M contingency. 36% of the contingency has been used. Mr. Paradise advised that it has not been used. The district has not to date approved that many change orders. Mr. Paradise advised that the district is doing well regarding change orders at this time. Mr. Paradise further noted that he believes that the district will be receiving a credit of approximately \$100,000 for one of the change orders.

Dr. Spitz inquired regarding the status of the installation of the PC's which were purchased. Mr. Paradise advised that as of this date they are all installed and operational. Lab aides and principals were made aware of this. Written directions have been provided to everyone. The 16 modulars at the high school and the modulars at the elementary schools are still in the progress of installation and will be operational shortly.

#### **Public Comment**

Mr. Solis Basen, Langhorne, PA questioned Mr. Paradise regarding a vendor disbursement on the Check Register which was identical. Mr. Paradise advised that he will obtain an answer and provide same to Mr. Basen.

Mr. Steve Rodos, Langhorne, PA thanked Mrs. Walls for her preparation and presentation of the Board minutes. Mr. Rodos stated that the comments are being read and heard and he further thanked the Board for their efforts.

#### **Adjournment of Meeting**

Mr. Webb moved the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Bowman seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Eccles adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Anita E. Walls  
Board Secretary