

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES
(WORK SESSION FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC MEETING)
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
October 16, 2003

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on October 16, 2003, in the Auditorium of the Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

BOARD MEMBERS:

Mrs. June R. Bostwick, President
Mrs. Kimberly A. Jowett, Vice-President
Mrs. Yvonne V. Butville
Mr. Richard M. Eccles
Mr. Steven E. Schoenstadt
Mr. Michael A. Soifer
Dr. William H. Spitz
Mr. Edward T. Stack

ADMINISTRATORS:

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

OTHERS: Approximately 85 persons from the public, staff and press

BOARD MEMBER ABSENT:

Ms. Carol A. Drioli

SECRETARY: Mrs. Anita E. Walls

SOLICITOR:

Thomas J. Profy, III, Esquire

I. **Call to Order**

Mrs. Bostwick called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

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

3. **Public Comment**

Mrs. Denise Mariakis, Langhorne, PA stated that she wrote a letter to the Board previously requesting a million dollar house. Mrs. Mariakis feels that she should have one. Mrs. Mariakis stated that her house is only seventeen years old. Many items in her house broke and she needed to replace those items. Mrs. Mariakis made the point that those items needed to be replaced and she took care of those items. She and her husband have been responsible homeowners. If you take care of what you have and replace it, keep up with it, it can last a long time. Mrs. Mariakis has a lot of taxes to pay and she will be in her home a long time.

Mr. Alden Thorpe, Levittown, PA stated that he is tired, however, he thinks the democratic system is working. Mr. Thorpe believes it came through at the last election, but no one wanted to pay attention to the results. Mr. Thorpe is glad the system works. Unfortunately, ten people have moved out since their taxes will be going up, and Mr. Thorpe wishes that they would not have sold their houses, however, they feel they cannot stay any longer.

Daniel O'Connor, Langhorne, PA read the following statement: "Why is it such a big choice to build a new high school. We all know the high school is in bad shape. Squirrels falling from the ceiling, leaking walls, and puddles all over the place. I have been at the high school even though I am only eleven. It gets crowded at the halls and with buckets it is very hard to move around. We elected the Board to make the

best choices for the kids. I know that if I make it to the high school and it is renovated or not built, my health will be affected since I have allergies and so do a lot of other kids. I know that it is more money on our taxes, but at least you are spending your money for a good purpose. I know that if you give up going to dinner once a month you will have a lot of money towards the high school in one year. I love going to the District and I would love to have a family here because this is a great District. Thank you for letting me speak.”

Mr. William O'Connor, Langhorne, PA, made the following statement: “Unlike the May Primaries, which failed to represent Region 3 supporters of a new high school, the Act 34 process was open to each and every citizen in Neshaminy. And those citizens spoke out loud and clear. 78% of the e-mails and letters received into the district favored new construction. But thanks to the new Board, a reckless threat of lawsuit may have compromised our public and financial standing. Oh yes, this stops the new school bond issue dead in its track, but it may also prevent us from floating other bonds necessary to make badly needed repairs.

I find it amusing that Rick Eccles was quoted as saying that their letter was intended to “plead to this current Board.” Problem is that you guys sent that letter to everyone BUT the current Board. I guess you overlooked that step.

Rick also says they're being “up front and honest.” OK Rick, please be up front and honest and tell me who helped formulate the strategy behind that letter? My guess is that we'll know exactly who it was once we see which companies the new Board chooses to do business with. And therein lies what is truly at the heart of this matter.

This isn't about a referendum. If Republicans are so hell-bent on referendums, why don't they want one in the Doylestown Courthouse issue? This is all about political patrons who were shut out of this process. And once the new Board with its old agenda seize control, these Republican patrons will be back in the game.

We will not allow this kind of politics to continue. We will fight to see that this District adopts a policy that prevents political patronage from dictating who gets to do business with Neshaminy. And in four years, we will fight to get you and your compatriots off this school board.

One last point. There is one word that I've never heard used to defend your point of view. That word is “Students.” Rick, I swear I've never heard you or Jay or Ritchie or Sue ever say that you were doing this in the best interests of our students. I guess our children don't mean anything until they can either vote, or make a campaign contribution. Shame on all four of you for forgetting why ALL of us are supposed to be here.”

Mr. Kevin Yeingst, Feasterville, PA noted that he has spoken many times on this issue. Mr. Yeingst does not understand how one letter written by four people who are not even on the Board can make the decision for the seven that were for this three weeks ago. It was a good idea three weeks ago, and it is still a good idea today. The worry is people moving out because they can't afford taxes. What about the people with families and children who are not going to move in or are going to move out because of the condition of the schools. Mr. Yeingst will not put his children into the high school or the middle schools. Once the elementary school level is complete and once his children have completed elementary school, his children will be out. Mr. Yeingst knows many families that will do the same. Mr. Yeingst believes this letter was written to the bond company because a certain bond company was not chosen and a company was selected that certain individuals did not want. The letter was written to scare the company. Mr. Yeingst questioned who is right.

Ms. Elen Snyder, President of the PTO at Pearl Buck Elementary School, addressed the incoming members of the School Board. Ms. Snyder stated: “How can you proceed on this course you are on when the

majority of the response you have had has been on the side of our children. For the health and well being of our children, say 'yes' to building a new high school. How many more times do we have to speak? How many more petitions do we have to sign before you understand the will of the people you represent? On Back to School Night at Pearl Buck we placed petitions on the table at the entrance to our school. At the end of both Back to School Nights we had 127 families in favor of building a new high school and 2 against. Most of the other PTO presidents from our district will tell you the same thing. There is overwhelming support from the families of school age children in this district to build a new high school. I promise you that you will not be re-elected in this district again if you stay on this course."

Mrs. Bobbi Schoenstadt, Lower Southampton, PA stated that she is a senior citizen and taxpayer and has lived in the district for thirty-two years. But, more than that she is proud to say that she is the wife of a Board member who had the knowledge, insight and the courage of his convictions to try to do what was educationally sound and morally right for the students of Neshaminy School District. Mrs. Schoenstadt can only hope that the new Board coming in, and what is left of the old Board, can look beyond non progressive actions and politics and remember that they are here to serve the children and do what is best for their educational needs for the future. Mrs. Schoenstadt gave special thanks to Dr. Boccuti, Mrs. Butville and Mr. Wilson for all that they have done for the students thus far.

Mrs. Marianne O'Connor, Langhorne, PA stated that in today's Philadelphia Inquirer it was stated, "that this district will have to repay millions of dollars for the planning of the new high school as well as find money for much needed repairs." Mr. Eccles stated "that this will be the first task the new board will have to address, and he wanted to be sure that payment issues are properly addressed and that we are not borrowing from Peter to pay Paul." Something brought up by Mr. Paradise several meetings ago was the issue of funds being taken from the Food Service Department and used to pay bonuses within the district. It doesn't sound as though this was proper use of those funds, and Mrs. O'Connor has not heard anything explaining what happened. In order to avoid this kind of problem in the future she formally requested a response from Mr. Paradise as to who authorized the use of those funds and for what purpose. Mrs. O'Connor stated "If you cannot respond to this question now, then please feel free to issue a statement to the local newspaper explaining what happened to these funds and how we can be assured that this kind of behavior won't happen again." With regards to those who still feel a referendum is the fairest way for the public to voice their opinion on the new high school, what do they think Act 34 was for? Mrs. O'Connor feels the May election was a poor turnout. Act 34 gave the public the most avenues to express their opinions on the new high school. Whether they spoke at the Act 34 meeting or showed support when others spoke. They also had the availability to send letters and e-mails to the district representing their view. All it takes is a stamp. Mrs. O'Connor stated that Mr. Lindner implied in today's Bucks County Courier Times that the letters and e-mails sent to the district regarding the new high school could be twisted and shaped to whatever form the district wants to portray. Since the letters and e-mails are open to the public, Mrs. O'Connor invites Mr. Lindner and whoever has doubts to read the five hundred plus responses and contact the person who wrote them and see if their view was properly portrayed. Mrs. O'Connor noted that Mr. Lindner also stated that the people for the high school stacked this meeting with PTO's and teachers. Mrs. O'Connor stated who do you think make up the PTO's. The "P" stands for parents and they can only be members of parents of students in this district. Any teachers who were here were parents of children in the district.

Mrs. Martha Lindner, Langhorne, PA, spoke about the 552 letters that were received by the district favoring a new high school. Mrs. Lindner stated, "On May 20, 2003, an election was held. Two members of the Board were running. Their platform was to build a new high school. Those members of the board who were for that and were running for election were Mrs. Butville and Mr. Schoenstadt. They were resoundly beaten by the referendum candidates. Those candidates are Webb, Eccles and Barrett. This is the result of an official election. Not 552 letters." Mrs. Lindner noted that an election assures us that each person who votes is a resident of Neshaminy and eighteen years of age, using their real name, will cast only one vote, is counted and certified by the election officials. Mrs. Lindner stated "No taxation without representation." The results of the election show that the referendum candidates had 81% of the

votes. Those votes were 4,868. The new school candidates had 19% of the votes, 1,124 votes. This is far more significant than just 552 letters. This community does not want a new high school. Mrs. Lindner stated that if there was a referendum you would have found out what this community really wants. Stop denying reality.

Mr. Thomas Gallagher, Levittown, PA stated that he is proud to have seen four candidates do what they thought they needed to do, what had to be done, to live up to their campaign promises. Mr. Gallagher stated that it is very refreshing in the political scene to see candidates go that far to do what they promised the residents of this community they would do. Mr. Gallagher read about the well organized minority in the paper. Mr. Gallagher noted that if you really thought that you could win a referendum, because it was nothing more than a well organized minority, it would be on the ballot November 4. Mr. Gallagher noted that by speaking with individuals on the board they know that there is no way a referendum could be won for a new building. Mr. Gallagher noted that there would not be one individual in this district that would be opposed to a new school if it could be done without the tax ramifications and responsibilities for the next twenty-five years. This community is paying enough and we cannot afford it. Mr. Gallagher noted that he is proud of the four candidates who went out of their way to make sure that this madness would stop, until they could get on the Board and do what is necessary for this community.

Mr. Todd Tranausky, Langhorne, PA stated that this Board has been told on numerous occasions what the majority of the people in this district want. That is to either wait till the new Board takes office to take up this issue or a public referendum. The fact that this Board fails to realize that and continues to move ahead with the process is personally apparent. Mr. Tranausky will vote on November 4, but not for anyone on the Board tonight.

Ms. Esther Mikus, Langhorne, PA stated the actions of Mr. Webb, Eccles and Bowman are outrageous. Those actions may have halted the building of a new high school at this time, but also put the children and district at jeopardy and risk. Building the new high school is the right thing to do. You have let politics and your personal agenda get in the way of what is the best interest for the district. Ms. Mikus stated that the Act 34 hearing was the mandate. Ms. Mikus does not want to pay for a new high school. However, it is the right thing to do. Ms. Mikus stated that is her opinion and she can look herself in the mirror, body and all, contrary to what Ardele Dick thinks. Mrs. Mikus knows right from wrong and can face herself in the mirror. Ms. Mikus stated that each generation before us has shouldered the responsibility for the next. This is not about the senior citizens; this is about our responsibility as adult members of the community for the next generation. Messrs. Eccles, Webb and Bowman are bullies. Just remember the young people you choose to ignore are the next group of votes. Ms. Mikus stated that you may have won a battle, however, you have not won the war. You have accomplished to light a fire under this community to make sure your terms are short lived. We will not go away.

Mr. Ralph Clark, Levittown, PA, stated that he spoke several times to the Board and chooses not to come back out. He was a Board member for six years and is currently the Middletown Township tax collector. Mr. Clark noted that the Act 34 hearing was a way to bypass listening to what the public wanted. If you truly want to hear the public you have a referendum and you find an answer. Act 34 is an opportunity for people to speak, but it does nothing to choose yes, no, right or wrong what this Board is going to do. Mr. Clark believes Mr. Eccles is the only Board member that is trying to listen to what the public has wanted. Mr. Clark blamed the Board for the problem it is facing. Mr. Clark said blame is being put on Mr. Eccles and the three other writers of the letter, but blame should be put on the Board for slowing things down. Mr. Clark spoke with Mrs. Butville in August and stated that she had a chance to get this thing turned around. The problem with the Board is that the public does not trust this Board. We need to build trust. We need to plant a seed. Mr. Clark recommended to Mr. Wilson that each Board member in December have his or her picture taken and a newsletter sent to the community to learn about each Board member and bring back the community.

Mr. Mark Fiore, Levittown, PA, thanked all the Board members for serving on the Board and requested that current members who are not on the next Board please do not vote. It is their moral obligation not to vote on such a hot potato. Mr. Fiore noted that the vote is the best thing that the district has. Had it in May, will have it in November. The vote separates us from a lot of countries. Letters, e-mails, Act 34 are nice, however, when we teach our children, teach them the power to vote. The referendum could be a civics lesson for the students. The parents could go to the polls. Mr. Fiore urged Board members to not vote if they are not going to be on the next Board.

Mr. Howard Lindner, Langhorne, PA stated that he knows at least five doctors, CIA agents, lawyers that have graduated from Neshaminy High School in the bad building. Mr. Lindner is amazed at how successful Neshaminy has been in the past. Mr. Lindner feels that a new building does not make a school; a good teacher makes the school. Mr. Lindner stated that from the beginning of the country with one room school houses students learned. Mr. Lindner noted that he got behind good, responsible candidates and they were victorious because they were good candidates and they listened to the people. Mr. Lindner stated that he is retired from politics, however, he will return for certain races. Neshaminy has always been number one. The people must have a right. Mr. Lindner noted that if he were teaching today he would bring his classes and go over how dictatorships work throughout world. Mr. Lindner noted that many people have limited speech. Power can do things that the normal person cannot. Mr. Lindner had students attend school board meetings and work on election campaigns.

Mrs. Rita Geddes, Feasterville, PA, stated that she is a proud Neshaminy graduate of the Class of 1983. Mrs. Geddes stated that she loves this school district and that is the reason why she continues to come out to the meetings, and like Howard Lindner, she would challenge that she probably loves it as much as he does and would do anything for this district. Mrs. Geddes cannot stand around and watch it go downhill. Mrs. Geddes' husband attended Morrisville in the 1960's when it was an excellent school. Today, it struggles. Mrs. Geddes cannot with a good conscience watch Neshaminy follow that same path. Mrs. Geddes agrees with Mr. Lindner that it is not the building that makes the school, it is the teachers, however, how does this district continue to recruit new teachers when Central Bucks has two new high schools, when Council Rock has a new high school, when Parkland has a new high school. Mrs. Geddes stated that we cannot compete with the facilities that we have and expect the district to stay where it is over the next thirty years and stay number one. Mrs. Geddes stated that Lower Southampton did not have a pro-school representative. Mr. Schoenstadt's defeat had much to do with Tawanka closing and peoples' bitterness in Lower Southampton over that fact as it did with the fact of the new school. Speaking to people coming in on Election Day they have been waiting to vote over Tawanka closing and they were very bitter. Mrs. Geddes has two children that will be attending the high school, and Mrs. Geddes would like to know from the new Board members who will be guaranteeing their health when they are in that building. Mrs. Geddes would like to know who is testing the air quality, who is taking care of the puddles on the floor, steam pipes have broken this past year and who will prevent that from happening this year. These issues need to be addressed for the safety of our children. Mrs. Geddes advised that the students that Mr. Lindner was speaking of who became doctors, lawyers, etc. graduated when the school was in good condition.

Mrs. Karen Maloch, Langhorne, PA stated that she graduated from Neshaminy thirty years ago and will be attending her reunion tomorrow night. Mrs. Maloch does not have any notes or statistics to show anyone. Mrs. Maloch has sat and listened respectfully at pros and cons, understands points from both sides, and Mrs. Maloch really believes that the physical plant at Neshaminy needs some sort of major improvement. Mrs. Maloch does not have an engineering degree and does not profess to have the knowledge, however, either a major renovation or new construction seems like the only choice for the potential health of our children. Mrs. Maloch has helped with many things at the high school, and one wall contains brown ooze on the wall. Mrs. Maloch hopes that the students would be put at the forefront, and whatever political back story may exist; please just leave it at the door. Mrs. Maloch urged everyone to worry about the children, their health, their viability and keep Neshaminy a place that she has always been deeply proud of, and she would like to continue to do so.

4. **Announcements**

Mrs. Bostwick announced that all bond support was indeed withdrawn from Neshaminy School District, and it was because of the letter signed by Mr. Eccles, Mr. Webb, Mr. Bowman and Mrs. Barrett. Today's Courier Editorial was correct. This letter is misleading and dishonest. They are further correct in their judgment that anything that this District needs to do in the future will be more costly and that translates into higher taxes for everyone. Mrs. Bostwick read the letter into the public permanent record so that everyone will know when and how this District was put at financial risk.

"The undersigned represents four seats of the Neshaminy School Board to be sworn in on December 1, 2003. As we are either an incumbent or candidates running unopposed along with current Board member, Carol Drioli, who has stated in official Board minutes that the project should not be undertaken without a referendum, we represent a majority of the incoming Board that have publicly stated that the new high school project should not be undertaken until the electors of the District have been given an opportunity to provide input via a referendum.

In December we intend to work with the previously mentioned Board member to take action to suspend the progress of this project until a voter referendum can be put on the ballot. Thus, there is no reason to incur the expenses of a bond issue to raise money for a project that may never go forward. Accordingly, we request that the school board abstain from taking any action on the proposed bond issue thereby avoiding unnecessary expense and risk to the School District. We will also seek to recoup all expenses incurred by the District to date related to this proposed bond issue. While we recognize that there is difference of opinion with respect to resolving the problems with Neshaminy High School, an attempt to rush the sale of bonds in the last days of the current school board will result in litigation because the orderly procedures needed for the issuance of debt cannot be met and the ultimate use of the funds is in dispute. If the bond sale is disrupted, the District's reputation in the bond market could suffer when the underwriters are unable to take delivery of the bonds. This benefits no one. Moreover, if the bonds are issued despite pending litigation, the School District will incur additional risk for issuing securities when the known facts make it clear that no one could reasonably expect that the money will be spent on the intended purpose."

Mrs. June Bostwick read the following statement.

"After an intensive study of the Neshaminy High School facility, the Neshaminy Board of School Directors determined that renovating the current structure would be neither feasible nor a cost effective means of dealing with the problems of this aging, outmoded building. In addition, it was determined that the existing structure is not adequate to provide the long-range educational programming envisioned for our District.

A majority of the Board therefore reached a decision earlier this year to replace the building with a state of the art facility that would provide the very best educational environment for our students. The Board felt that a more modern school plant would prove more conducive in providing our students with the skills necessary to be successful in an increasingly competitive workplace. The Minneapolis, MN, architectural firm of ATS&R was selected to oversee the proposed construction process.

Subsequently, the Board sought the necessary funding of this project by enlisting the services of the highly respected firms of RBC Dain Rauscher and Janney Montgomery Scott to float the bonds needed to complete the project. At the outset, we were assured that selling the bonds did not appear to be a problem because of the solid bond rating enjoyed by the Neshaminy School District.

We have now been advised by the bonding firms that bonds will not be issued due to a letter received from current Board member, Rick Eccles and three Board candidates, Sue Barrett, Jason Bowman and Rich Webb. In their letter to the bonding firms, they asserted that their election to the Board is

assured. Further, when seated at the reorganization meeting in December, they will strenuously oppose the floating of bonds to fund the needed renovations.

Additionally, the individuals in question have threatened the bonding firms with litigation should the firms proceed with the planned bond issue at this juncture. It has now become apparent that our bonding firms will concede to the threat of litigation and delay any further action on our bond issue. Of immediate concern is the problem of meeting our financial obligations attributable to capital improvements already made and for the architect fees already billed us. With some financial obligations due in February, we will find it difficult to meet them within the constraints of our Operating Budget and without the additional funds the bond issue would have provided.

Given these circumstances, the current Board has few alternatives. Nevertheless, the Board will continue to meet the construction regulations as set forth by the Commonwealth i.e. the submission of Act 34 materials and Plancon D, E and F. By so doing, the Board will remain in a position to move forward should the funding dilemma be resolved.

However, because of the action taken by potential in-coming Board members, the Board is left with the onerous task of placing its funding efforts on hold. The delay could ultimately prove costly not only in terms of the finances involved but also in terms of the damage done to our educational programming.”

5. **Items for Approval**

a) **Overnight Trips**

Trip information distributed for the following trip was self-explanatory:

i) **March of Dimes Youth Day – Neshaminy High School, November 17 – 18, 2003 – Harrisburg, PA**

There was board consensus for the trip.

b) **American Education Week – November 16 – 22, 2003**

Mr. Wilson advised that the Board will approve a proclamation designating American Education Week from November 16 – 22, 2003 and Mr. Wilson welcomed the community to visit the schools during that period of time.

c) **Revised 2003 – 2004 School Calendar – Mr. Wilson**

Mr. Wilson noted that the School Calendar needed revisions since Election Day has been changed from May 18, 2004 to April 27, 2004. The Inservice Day will take place on April 27, 2004.

e) **Resolution for Approval of Plancon Part D, E, F – Mr. Wilson**

Mr. Wilson advised that the Board will approve a motion this evening to submit all the Act 34 materials to the Department of Public Education for their review and/or approval.

d) **Approval of Bid/s Budget Transfers**

Mr. Paradise announced that there were no bids and one Budget Transfer 04 – 1 which the Board will be asked to approve at the public meeting.

6. **Items for Information**

None.

7. **Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Wilson advised that the three students who broke into the high school and committed the vandalism have been adjudicated and placed in a forestry camp in upstate Pennsylvania. Mr. Wilson noted that students are caught every single time and why students continue to attempt these acts is

unknown. Mr. Wilson noted that the school district would use every effort possible to make certain that the courts sentence students as adults if they commit these crimes.

8. **Committee Reports**

a) **Board Policies**

Mrs. Butville advised that Mr. Marotto is continuing to review the present policies. Several policies in the 600's needed grammatical changes. Mrs. Butville noted that Policy #520 was reviewed in accordance with No Child Left Behind. Policy #520 replaced Policy #122. Mrs. Butville advised that the next meeting will be October 30, 2003.

b) **Education Foundation**

Dr. Spitz advised that the Education Foundation raises money and it goes directly into the classrooms in the form of grants. These are for items not in the budget that the District cannot afford to put into the budget. Dr. Spitz noted that the Foundation is looking for more support and more members and also a Treasurer. Dr. Spitz advised if anyone would like to participate the Foundation meets once a month.

c) **Finance/Facilities**

Mr. Soifer advised that there is no activity on the Finance Board.

d) **IU Board**

No report.

e) **Educational Development**

Dr. Spitz advised that a meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2003, 7:00 p.m. at which time the AE program will be discussed. Also items relating to the music program at the High School and summer school will also be discussed.

f) **Technical School**

Mrs. Butville advised that the Tech School met at the end of September and discussion revolved around the PSSA scores, which need to be raised. Two new clubs were approved – a choir and OSHA – Health Educational Service club with 123 students interested in the club. Senior class is discussing where graduation will take place. Mrs. Butville advised that Neshaminy currently has eighty-one (81) ninth graders at the Tech School. On September 30, 2003 Back To School Night took place. College Career Fair was held on October 14, 2003. Open House will be on November 6, 2003.

Dr. Spitz noted that on October 23, 2003 the Funding Committee will take another look at the funding formula for the sending Districts. Dr. Spitz has prepared a tentative proposal for consideration.

g) **Technology**

Mr. Stack advised that a meeting is scheduled for October 23, 2003 at 7:00 p.m.

9. **Future Topics**

10. **Agenda Development**

Public meeting will follow.

11. **Correspondence**

Board secretary advised that there was no correspondence.

12. **Other Board Business**

Mrs. Butville made the following statement:

"I understand that cost is a very big concern for all of the taxpayers in this district. Part of that is not our responsibility. It is because of the state and federal mandates, and things that we are mandated to do that cost money and the district does not have the funding for. Special education is funded supposedly from the federal government; however, the District is mandated to fund it. Neshaminy knows exactly how many students we are educating in special education, because the district cannot educate them until they are identified. But even though the district knows the exact number, funding is not received to the exact number. The formula is an arbitrary formula used which is a percentage of the total population. Because of this, last year there was an eleven million dollar shortfall. The District was supposed to get reimbursed for this amount, but it did not. Pennsylvania has one of the worst school funding formulas in the entire nation. We are 49th. Legislatures for the past eight years have been discussing many different types of formulas that would help Neshaminy, but nothing has been passed in the legislative body. Just talking about it does not help us. With No Child Left Behind being enacted that will involve massive amounts of paperwork and money. Reassessment needs to be done on the County level. The district can do nothing with reassessment. The one thing we can try to take care of is our buildings. I do not want to jeopardize the real estate values of the homes in this District. I am upset that we have senior citizens that cannot afford to keep their homes. Neshaminy's budget in the last four years has been reimbursed less than 20% from the State, which means that over 80% of the budget comes from the taxpayer. The legislators are still fighting about the educational portion of the budget. No school is funded so far this year. Several schools have been loaned money because there are several schools in this State that are going to close because they do not have money to run the schools.

Many people are upset about the high school. Talk about a well organized minority that has been working against the school. Sentimental reasons are why some do not want a new high school. Some people feel that they cannot afford the costs. This district for over ten years has known that something needed to be done at the high school. It was put on a timetable and two years ago is when it surfaced. These are not general maintenance items; these are boilers, windows, plumbing, etc. This Board has looked at all the different options. But what will be the best for the students and cheapest for the taxpayers. After looking at all options, this Board, all nine members, including Ms. Drioli, have stated that the new building is the best for the community and students. Even Mr. Eccles many times has stated that the new building is the best way to go. Renovations would be extremely costly. I know that the new building is the best way to go for several reasons. If it were functionally useful in today's society I would go for renovations, but it is so spread out and sprawling. It is over two and one-half miles of hallway. The students Mr. Lindner is referring to did not have to walk two and one-half miles.

This has become a very political issue, but the political side has come from those people that are out there making it one. You will see the people who make the political statement and then leave and do not even stay for the truth. Most of the present Board has been very forth coming with the facts. We held many informational meetings just on the high school project. The public was free to come out and the Board wanted to inform them. The Board was not hiding anything. Several newsletters were sent district wide. This Board has a responsibility to do what is best and do it now. The present Board members were voted onto the Board and now have a responsibility to fulfill their responsibility until the end of our term. I will be voting. Those that do not know the difference between the new building and renovations, one major concern is health. Renovation will take at least 6-8 years working around the students, which will cause health problems. The new building will be 3 years, and will be constructed in a separate area. Students will be attending the present school and will not be concerned with dust.

Now is the best time because interest rates are so low. If we wait another year it will be more costly, or because of what has happened, the bond rating will not be as favorable in the future."

Mrs. Butville advised that her name is in the phone book if anyone would like to speak with her regarding the issues. That is part of the job and Mrs. Butville will be very happy to speak with anyone who would like to call her.

Mr. Schoenstadt congratulated the incoming Board members. In 1972 Mr. Schoenstadt decided to run for his first term on the School Board. Mr. Schoenstadt was a democrat fighting the Maple Point High School issue. Mr. Schoenstadt knows how difficult it can be. Mr. Schoenstadt lost the attempt to stop the building of Maple Point, however, he won his seat on the Board and won a second term. As frustrating as it is to lose in principle, it is good to see the democratic process work. Mr. Schoenstadt agrees with that. The outcome will be an extraordinarily painful experience for the new Board because based on Mr. Eccles, Finance Committee Chairman, he pushed the project aggressively, the old architect was fired, hired the new one by a 9-0 unanimous vote to bring in the new architect. Mr. Eccles and Ms. Drioli aggressively and faithfully supported every activity for the last 2 1/2 years that moved this project along. Mr. Schoenstadt can understand the politics that caused them to change their positions. Mr. Schoenstadt does not fault either of them, however, he hopes that they have the common sense and the good judgment to recognize that we sit here not for the politicians, but for the children and the educational programs of the Neshaminy School District. Mr. Schoenstadt noted that objectives need to put the children and the district's educational programs first. Mr. Schoenstadt stated that if that does not happen Neshaminy will not be as good a school district in the future as it has been in the past. Mr. Schoenstadt would like to see each of the new Board members recognize their responsibility to the children and Mr. Schoenstadt wishes them all the luck in the world in successfully accomplishing what needs to be done for the students of Neshaminy School District.

Mr. Stack asked Mr. Eccles that since the letter of October 8, 2003, was read into the minutes could he kindly explain to this Board how he will recoup all expenses incurred by the District to date related to this proposed bond issue. Mr. Stack proceeded with the following statement:

"The referendum candidates have succeeded despite steadfast refusal to communicate their plan for the high school. They continue to call for a referendum, but we still don't know their plans except that they generally accept that something needs to be done. Then just answer this, what happens if your referendum fails? How do we then address the critical needs at the high school? Given your success in the primary one would have thought that you would have come clean and finally shared your plan with this community. We are still waiting and wondering. Wondering why you are so silent. Wondering what you are hiding. Except on one occasion, one referendum candidate has spoken at a school board meeting. This is an injustice. As we all know the referendum candidates have threatened a lawsuit that has seriously damaged the ability of this school district to deal with its capital needs. We are not just talking about the high school here; they have established a template that could stop other efforts to raise funding. Further, they deliberately misrepresented the position of a standing member of this Board. How is it that they were able to succeed? It starts with establishing partnerships. Partnerships with people in high places. People with great influence who have an appetite to exploit this community. Who are these people? Who are your partners? What do they want from us? Don't insult us by suggesting that you wrote this letter on your own. It is the collective opinion of all of our financial and legal advisors that this letter was done professionally. What promises did you make to these partners? What is it going to cost us? Come clean and stop yet another injustice to this community. What we do understand is this much. We will be there to watch you every step of the way and you will be held fully accountable for your actions."

Mr. Eccles made the following statement:

"Set the Record Straight, the Community Deserves Answers. It seems that everyone has taken their shots at me and the other candidates. We need to set the record straight. Our pro-referendum group ran successfully in the primary last May. The voters overwhelmingly voted out of office the candidates who were opposed to a referendum. (By a 5 to 1 margin, with over 5,000 votes cast and counted.) The issue was "have a referendum or not." This was not a school no school issue. As I have stated publicly many times, I am not opposed to a new school, just the mechanics. "We need a referendum." The voters need it, want it and deserve it.

People should be fully aware that before our group took action in drafting a letter to the bond underwriters, we consulted professionals from Wall Street in New York City to Bucks County and as far south as Virginia. We were assured that contrary to what has been said and reported that our actions have not and will not in any way affect the future of bonds, rates or district credit worthiness in any way.

If the bonds had been sold which most are sold two days prior to the signing of the bond by the school board then the district faced possible damages. Our letter was received four days prior to the normal sale of that said bonds.

It was also brought to my attention by bond professionals that an injustice was undertaken by this board for not putting the bond out for bid. We should have had four or five bond companies present a prospectus to the school district. This process could save the taxpayers millions. My question to the board is, "How is it that our Solicitor's partners son was named bond underwriter?" I think the community deserves an open and honest explanation.

Also, throughout this process I personally have not been kept informed or invited to any meetings with bond personnel or bond counsel, even though our intentions were well known after the primary. If I had been involved with any of the bond proceedings, this subject would have come to a head prior to 10/8/03. Why is it that myself and other Board members were not involved? Why is it that the bond counsel and underwriters were not made aware that we could stop this with one letter? With all of the resources that this district and the bond people had, why was this letter such a surprise? The community deserves an open and honest explanation. How many other public meetings have taken place that the public is unaware of?

This issue is not about a construction project or bond issue, it is simply a voter's rights issue. We strongly believe that the taxpayers should have a vote through a binding referendum before large expenditures are extended. Various property tax reform bills are before our state senate in Harrisburg and many include the mandates of public referendum on large expenditures. Binding referendums are currently legal and constitutional in the state of Pennsylvania.

We hope that the community has learned how important one person's vote can be. Have we not learned anything from the 2000 Gore/Bush presidential election? Every registered voter will hopefully have a say in this issue in April 2004.

We all recognize the need for a major project at the high school. Again, our group is not opposed to this project but to the process by which we have gotten to this point. The future board is committed to providing a safe, healthy and up to date environment for our students to achieve in.

Thank you for your time."

13. Adjournment of Meeting

Mrs. Bostwick moved that this portion of the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Stack seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mrs. Bostwick adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

PUBLIC MEETING

Call to Order

Mrs. Bostwick called the Public meeting to order at 8:25 p.m.

Student Representative Report given by Lauren Recupido and Stephanie Huston.

- Homecoming Dance was held on Friday, October 3, 2003 – 120 students attended
- Carnival went well on Saturday with all extra-curricular activities having a booth

The student poll is in process and the Neshaminy newspaper will also be holding a Poll. Some of the questions on the poll will be:

- Is it important for 9th grade to be in high school?
- Do you believe that Neshaminy High School has a good learning environment?

The results should be available for the November meeting.

The student representatives will be attending the School Board Convention in Hershey, PA to represent Neshaminy High School along with advisor, Dr. Dickler. The representatives hope to bring back new ideas to implement into the school.

The student representatives questioned the availability of the gymnasium for events other than sports. The representatives also wanted to start a new tradition and have a Winter Ball. The only available date is January 30, 2004, due to the basketball team. Representatives were concerned that the dance may not be able to take place if the team needed a make-up game or practice that evening. Sports receive priorities from the Administration. Student Council is concerned that they do not have adequate opportunity to use the gymnasium facility.

Further, the Senior Class of 2004 would like to know why the schedule does not include finishing school one week prior like past years.

Mr. Wilson responded that he would look into the concerns presented by the student representatives. Mr. Wilson further commented that the seniors graduated a week earlier due to the fact that Act 80 time was allowing students to graduate early. This is a very complicated process in Harrisburg. Neshaminy is the only district that graduates early and there are reasons. The district must turn over workshop time and inservice time for senior teachers only. However, when the district does that it is a deduction from the total number of hours of instructional time. The district can no longer take that much instructional time away from the district. The district will be penalized by funds from Harrisburg. Mr. Wilson noted in the past it was able to be accomplished, however, it will no longer be obtainable.

Mr. Wilson advised that the district will attempt to provide some relief after the snow days are taken into consideration.

The student representatives spoke on behalf of the Student Council and majority of their peers:

“There is support for the new school and there is concern for the future. This issue has turned into an opinion issue, not an issue whether or not the school is fit for educating 3,000 students each day. Should it not be about the students? Although I am merely a student I know that Neshaminy will not be a safe learning environment in years to come. Repairs will do nothing but patch up old mistakes that keep falling apart. I am at the high school each day. Even today we had a water fountain leak and a minor flood, because it broke and we cannot use it. At the high school the students have pride in the sports, academic and extra-curricular programs. But not in the school itself. I know how important it is to have pride. But, I can even say that I do not hold much pride in our school building. It is beyond repair and it is a waste of time, effort and money to keep repatching. Some may feel that pride in a building is not important, but it is to the students and faculty. Neshaminy is a school filled with great traditions, but not the school itself. The building does not represent this. We commend the people who know we need a new building. This cannot be an opinion or money issue. We all need to stop and think about the plain and simple facts about our high school and its condition. The solution is clear. Building a new school is unavoidable and will be done eventually. Even the best teachers cannot fix leaking ceilings and rats running across the floor. Even during the winter teachers need to keep the windows open because the air circulation is so poor. There will always be a difference of opinion, but we need to do this for the students and their future. Someone mentioned that there is a public trust issue here, well the students are going to trust the school board. We trust you will look

straight at the facts and care about the students to make the right decisions. We would also like to ask the public to think about the right decisions for the students.”

Approval of Minutes

Upon motion of Mr. Soifer and seconded by Mrs. Butville the Board approved the minutes of the September 16, 2003 Public Meeting by a vote of eight ayes and zero nays. Ms. Drioli was not present.

Approval of Treasurer’s Report, Bills for Payment, Investments, and Exonerations of Personal and Per Capita Tax – Mr. Paradise presented the following for approval:

- September 2003 Treasurer’s Report, subject to audit
- Bills for payment Check Register – September 2003
- Two Escrow Funds and One Investment Fund
- Budget Transfers
- Personal and per capita tax exonerations for September 2003

Mr. Stack moved the September 2003 Treasurer’s Report be approved, subject to audit, and the September, 2003 bills for payment be approved. Mr. Schoenstadt seconded the motion.

Dr. Spitz made a motion to direct Mr. Paradise not to make any future payments regarding this year’s audit subject to further direction from the Board. Mr. Schoenstadt seconded the motion.

The Board approved the motion regarding future audit payments by a vote of eight ayes and zero nays. Ms. Drioli was not present.

The Board approved the Treasurer’s Reports, subject to audit, and bills for payment by a vote of eight ayes and zero nays. Ms. Drioli was not present.

Certified and Support Personnel Actions

Mr. Wilson presented the following for approval:

- Elections – Certified Personnel
- Resignations and Leaves of Absence – Certified Personnel
- Elections – Support Personnel
- Resignations and Leaves of Absence – Support Personnel
- Addendum of Elections of Certified Personnel
- Addendum of Elections of Support Personnel
- Addendum to Resignation/Leaves of Support Personnel
- Extra Curricular Staff and Salaries Report

Mr. Wilson recommended the approval of the personnel report for certified and support personnel and the Extra Curricular Staff and Salaries Report.

Mrs. Jowett moved the personnel actions be approved. Mrs. Butville seconded the motion. The Board approved the personnel report for certified and support personnel and the Extra Curricular Staff and Salaries Report by a vote of eight ayes and zero nays. Ms. Drioli was not present.

Motion:

Mr. Eccles presented the following motion:

AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

November 16 – 22, 2003

WHEREAS, public schools are the backbone of our democracy, providing young people with the tools they'll 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 custodians or 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 16 - 22, 2003, as the 82nd annual observance of American Education Week.

Mr. Soifer seconded the motion. The Board approved the American Education Week motion by a vote of eight ayes and zero nays. Ms. Drioli was not present.

Motion: REVISED 2003 - 2004 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Dr. Spitz presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, since the General Primary is April 27, 2004, there will be no school that day; and

WHEREAS, classes will be held May 18, 2004, which was initially scheduled as Election Day.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of School Directors approves the attached revised school calendar.

Mrs. Jowett seconded the motion. The Board with a vote of eight ayes and zero nays approved the revised 2003 - 2004 school calendar. Ms. Drioli was not present.

Motion: Resolution for Approval of Plancon Part D, E, F

Mrs. Jowett presented the following:

WHEREAS, the Board of School Directors of Neshaminy School District ("School District") did on September 9, 2003 hold a Hearing required under Act 34 of 1973 for the New Neshaminy High School situated in Middletown Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania ("Project"); and

WHEREAS, the School District accepted written testimony regarding the proposed New Neshaminy High School Project through and until October 10, 2003 ("Written Statements"); and

WHEREAS, the Board has heretofore submitted Plancon A & Plancon B for the Project to the Pennsylvania Department of Education; and

WHEREAS, the Board of School Directors desires to approve the New Neshaminy High School Project #3002, as described in Plancon Part D Project Accounting Based on Estimates, Plancon Part E Design and Development, and Plancon Part F Construction Documents, and the submission of said Plancon Parts D, E and F to Pennsylvania Department of Education, and to authorize the submission of the Act 34 Hearing Transcript and Written Statements to Pennsylvania Department of Education.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of School Directors of Neshaminy School District as follows:

1. The Board of School Directors hereby authorizes and approves the New Neshaminy High School Project #3002 as described in Plancon Part D Project Accounting Based on Estimates, Plancon Part E Design and Development, and Plancon Part F Construction Documents in the form annexed to this Resolution, and the submission of said Plancon Parts D, E and F for New Neshaminy High School Project #3002 to Pennsylvania Department of Education for approval.
2. The Board of School Directors hereby authorizes and approves the submission of the Act 34 Hearing Transcript and Written Statements to Pennsylvania Department of Education.
3. The Board of School Directors hereby authorizes and directs the Project Architect to insure that all plans related to this Project conform to generally accepted codes and guidelines set forth in Section 349.16 of the Pennsylvania Department of Education Standards.
4. The Board of School Directors hereby authorizes and directs that the School District obtain all necessary approvals from local, regional and state agencies relating to health, safety, design, planning highway access or freedom from flooding and subsistence prior to entering into Construction Contracts.
5. The Board of School Directors certifies to PDE that phase work will proceed whether or not additional onsite work that is subject to Act 34 of 1973 goes forward.
6. The Board of School Directors acknowledges that the New Neshaminy High School Project will not be eligible for reimbursement until bids are opened for the final construction phase and Plancon Part G for the entire Project building is approved by Pennsylvania Department of Education.
7. The Board of School Directors hereby approves, ratifies and confirms all actions heretofore taken by the School District with respect to the New Neshaminy High School Project #3002, and authorizes and directs that the officers of the School District after consultation with the professionals of the School District to do any and all acts and things and execute and deliver any and all documents necessary to carry this Resolution into effect.

Mrs. Butville seconded the motion.

Mr. Soifer questioned the cost factors involved and how long is the submission effective since there is no bond issue. Mr. Wilson responded that there are no additional cost factors. The Plancon forms have already been completed and without financing the project stops and the only thing that occurs is approval for all the documents that have been submitted to Harrisburg to date. Mr. Wilson noted that they will remain open until either the next Board acts to move forward or to withdraw Plancon D, E, and F which would be within a reasonable period of time.

Mr. Profy advised that after the approval of Plancon D, E and F the school district would be notified of the approval and would be asked for the submission of Plancon G. If Plancon G were not submitted then the Department of Education would close the file.

Mrs. Butville questioned if the file were closed, what if the new Board decided that this is the right way to go, what will they then have to do to get the project back on track? How much will it cost and how much time will have been lost?

Mr. Profy advised that length of time, scope of project, etc. will be a factor. Mr. Profy noted that if a new project assignment were gotten the process would need to reoccur, however, the components of the process, work that the architect has done, subject to modifications if any required by code changes, has been completed and is in place.

Mr. Schoenstadt researched that since there is not added cost and there is a reasonable time period which could extend until after the referendum, and if the referendum shows that the community is actually strongly in favor of this, there will be almost no additional costs to the new Board or to the District to go ahead with the project. Mr. Schoenstadt advised that on that basis he will go along with completing all the necessary paperwork, except Plancon G, and this gives the new Board the opportunity to really evaluate the entire Plan to determine whether they want a referendum. If the community favors a new school, there would really be only a short process to get same on line. This gives the new Board flexibility on what needs to be done.

Mr. Eccles noted that Mr. Schoenstadt sent a very prudent message. Mr. Eccles noted that the new Board members are not looking to totally derail any investment that has been made; we are just looking for a referendum. Mr. Eccles noted that in that sense of goodwill he will also support this motion. Mr. Eccles does not wish to see time go to waste.

The Board approved the Resolution with a vote of eight ayes and zero nays. Ms. Drioli was not present.

Federal Programs

Mr. Wilson stated that there were grants totaling \$993,094.00. More grants will follow in the future.

Other Board Business

No other board business.

Correspondence

The Board Secretary advised that there was no correspondence.

Public Comment

Mr. Eccles questioned why the public could not speak at the Work Session and then again during the Public Session of the meeting. Mrs. Bostwick advised that this meeting is considered a combined session. Mr. Eccles noted that in the essence of goodwill in the community the people should be allowed to speak.

Mr. Richard Edelman, Oakford, PA, requested a copy of the letter Mrs. Bostwick read this evening and he would like to know how the District spent \$3M on a school getting designed that we had not decided that we were going to build. Mr. Edelman is sure that all records are made available to the public. Mr. Edelman is proposing that everyone, whether pro or con for the school, first investigate this Board who tried to push this project. Mr. Edelman congratulates Mr. Eccles and the others. This is the only group in our country to have the power unchecked to make decisions which effect the taxpayer. Mr. Edelman noted that a precedent has been set to hold school boards up from sticking it to the people who voted them in and trusted them. Mr. Edelman questioned whether the Board will accept accountability for all the money spent on this school that was never decided to be built, and that the taxpayer is stuck paying. Mr. Edelman noted that two Board members have told him that he is trouble maker. Mr. Edelman noted that when things get tough at home, you start cutting back. It's a recession when your neighbors are having trouble, however, it is a depression when it hits you. Mr. Edelman noted that his taxes upon moving into the District were \$975.00 in 1975. They are currently \$4,800.00.

Mrs. Helene Kostar, Langhorne, PA stated that she commends Rick, Ritchie, Jason and Sue for what they did because as far as she is concerned this School Board got exactly what it deserved this evening. Mrs. Kostar noted that almost one year ago tonight she requested a referendum, but demanded one, since Mrs. Kostar could not trust any decisions to be made by this School Board and the people should be the ones to make the decision as to whether or not a new high school should be built. Mrs. Kostar is a democrat and proud of it and it is not just a republican decision that is being made to ask for a referendum. Mrs. Kostar questioned several times the \$2.1M spent on the architectural firm, rather than on the children. Why have the AE and music programs been cut? The audience has been concerned with the students, not the School Board members. Mrs. Kostar questioned why pertinent meetings were canceled, i.e. Senior Center, and never layout the truth,

the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, including to the bond counsel that people who voted were in favor of a referendum and for that matter also tell them that the newly elected members were in favor of the referendum. Instead, the Board keeps feeding the public the magic number of \$100 a year increase when the new high school is being built. Mrs. Kostar noted that the increase will be well of \$100 over 25 years. Mrs. Kostar hopes that everyone will continue to definitely learn from this experience and listen to the public. One year has been wasted and plenty of money. Mrs. Kostar noted that Mr. Stack stated that black marks are being made against the school district for this issue. Neshaminy has put black marks in the paper all on its own.

Mrs. Sharon Binder, Feasterville, PA, stated that she cares and loves Neshaminy School District. Mrs. Binder is proud to be here this evening. Mrs. Binder strongly disagrees with Mr. Lindner. Mrs. Binder notes that much more goes into the children's education than just teachers. I like to think that a great deal of my own children's success is in part myself and my husband. It takes support and caring as teachers, parents, coaches, guidance counselors, and in short, a community commitment in education. We need to rise up to the responsibility for the education, health and welfare of our children. Mrs. Binder noted that none of the parents here this evening would want to threaten a lawsuit. However, know that we are aware that the health and safety of our children is in jeopardy. None of us wants to see our children having to be educated somewhere else as we have seen in other districts, where the air quality and mold levels have been found unacceptable. We implore the present and future Board to do the right thing for our children. Mrs. Binder stated that if the building is found to be unacceptable it could be an educational and financial nightmare for the entire community. Please do the right thing for our children and community. Do not put them through a remodel. The cost would be far greater both monetarily and educationally. Mrs. Binder thanked the Board for their commitment to the children.

Mr. Tom Fister, Langhorne, PA, stated that he is the parent of a current fourth and sixth grade student. Mr. Fister is concerned about their health if they do attend school at the new building. Mr. Fister's son has asthma. Mr. Fister believes that the referendum is a good idea, because it is too much money to spend without getting strong consensus from the public and have them say spend the money. Mr. Fister noted that the school sounds very expensive, but it should be compared with other similar projects. Mr. Fister suggested that a future meeting be held at the high school, have a detailed tour, and have someone knowledgeable on the subject and allow the public to see it for themselves.

Mr. Phil Schieber, Langhorne, PA, stated that there were no winners this evening. Mr. Schieber noted that the district faces problems and Mr. Schieber commended the existing Board for initiating a letter to other districts around the state. Mr. Schieber asked the new School Board to consider forming an action committee to follow up on that issue and to enlist other school boards within the state to go to the legislator. The governor stated that on the first day in office he would address the problem. Mr. Schieber noted that he is in office for over 9 months. The Senate and House have been playing badminton with many major issues. Mr. Schieber noted that they are not against public education; we are in favor of public education. We need to obtain letter writing campaigns, telephone calls, attend more public meetings. Mr. Schieber is not aware whether a school board's charter will enable such an action committee, but we need to find out how to accomplish this as a community, so that some adjunct to the District needs to be started. Mr. Schieber noted that the issue is not a new high school, the issue is not \$100M bond, the issue is the source and distribution of funding of our schools. The community needs to do something at the community roots level. Mr. Schieber stated that Neshaminy School District needs a new high school. The Neshaminy School District cannot currently afford it.

Mrs. Maria Leszczyszyn, Feasterville, PA, stated that she is concerned about her children's bus stop. Four years ago when her daughter started kindergarten Mrs. Leszczyszyn walked her to the end of Clover Lane and Bustleton Pike. The authorized bus stop for her child in front of the Conrail tracks on Bustleton. Mrs. Leszczyszyn asked the driver if he could pick her up at Clover Lane and Briar Lane a small street with two houses. The bus driver stated yes. For four years her child was picked up at Clover and Briar, what I felt was a safe bus stop. This year Mrs. Leszczyszyn has been notified that her child is going to an unauthorized bus stop and her nine year old and six year old must stand at the corner of Bustleton and Clover ten feet away from

Conrail tracks that are active tracks. Mrs. Leszcyszyn has approached Mr. Blasch, Director of Transportation, and he feels it is unsafe for a bus to back up on the street. Mrs. Leszcyszyn would like the School Board to look into this, because the possibility of the bus backing into a parked car is a smaller risk than the possibility of my children being struck by a car. If anyone on the Board is aware of the intersection, they would know that cars travel at 40 mph. Thank you for the consideration in this matter.

Mr. Harold Landman, Levittown, PA, stated that he is Neshaminy graduate and has two children in Neshaminy. Mr. Landman found it funny that Mr. Stack would question the integrity of the four Board members that wrote the letter and the District had the bond issuance serviced by Mr. Profy's relative and did not accept bids for same. Mr. Landman stated that it reminds him of an old saying that a man that checks under the bed has probably hidden there himself. Mr. Landman is proud of his father-in-law, Ritch Webb and Mr. Eccles.

Mrs. Donna Esposito, Langhorne, PA, questioned the student representatives on how much time they receive to get to other classes. The representatives responded that they have five minutes between each class and eight minutes for locker breaks. Forty to fifty minutes are spent walking in the hallways because there is not enough time. Mrs. Esposito is an advocate of children getting exercise and walking. Mrs. Esposito points out that the students do not have time to get from one class to another because the buildings are so sprawled out and twenty-five pound back packs are carried. No one is against students walking and getting exercise.

Board Comment

Mrs. Butville noted that the students walking the halls is good exercise, however, that we are not paying for that. The students have a gym class that is required by the state for their exercise. Mrs. Butville stated that in a smaller, condensed school the district could take one minute out of the travel time a day, that would be more than 20 hours a year extra classroom time. We are paying to educate them. Mr. Stack advised Mrs. Esposito that he will be taking his daughter to Saturday morning detention because she has been swept for the third time. Mr. Stack had the opportunity to attend Back to School Night and Mr. Stack passed Mr. Eccles several times, and Mr. Stack was late to every single class. The problem is the way the facility is laid out. Mr. Stack is concerned that as a community it is critically important that we work together to get credible information out in front of the community in order that decisions can be made. Mr. Stack received political mailings that stated "Stop the runaway School Board. While the Middletown Supervisors kept municipal taxes down, the School Board has sent property taxes skyrocketing. Now they want to increase taxes by five hundred dollars per year for the next twenty-five years." Mr. Stack stated that is entirely fabricated. Mr. Stack noted that misinformation reaches the community.

Mrs. Jowett noted that the Ice Hockey Club, which is not sponsored by the District, is in first place for the first time in ten years when the season started.

Adjournment

Mr. Soifer moved the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Schoenstadt seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mrs. Bostwick adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Anita E. Walls
Board Secretary