

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
(PUBLIC MEETING)  
REORGANIZATION MEETING  
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
December 5, 2005

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on December 5, 2005 in the Board Room at Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

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

**ADMINISTRATORS:**

Mr. P. Howard Wilson  
Dr. Louis T. Muenker  
Mrs. Jacqueline Rattigan  
Mr. Joseph V. Paradise  
Mr. Bruce M. Wyatt

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

**SECRETARY:**

Mrs. Anita E. Walls

**OTHERS:** Approximately 26 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.

**Public Comment**

Mr. Marvin Dickler, Langhorne, PA, welcomed all the new members to the Board, and hopefully this Board will take into consideration and try to improve the student averages that have been coming from the various schools, rather than trying to find ways to spend more money. Mr. Dickler believes that a good majority of the students in Neshaminy are interested in learning, but there are a few trouble makers in several of the classes that disrupt and create a problem so that the teachers need to spend as much time trying to keep the classroom under control as they do teaching students. Mr. Dickler hopes that the Administration can understand that it will be a benefit to get these students out the classrooms and into the alternative system so that the majority of the children that wish to learn can learn.

**Reorganization of the Neshaminy Board of School Directors**

In accordance with the State Code, the Board held its reorganization meeting.

**Election of Temporary President** - Mr. Eccles requested nominations be presented for Temporary President for the reorganization of the Neshaminy Board of School Directors. Mr. Bowman nominated Mr. Webb as temporary President and Mrs. Cummings seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations. Mr. Eccles moved that the nominations for Temporary President of the Neshaminy Board of School Directors be closed. The Board approved the motion with nine ayes. Mr. Webb acted as Temporary President.

Loyalty Oaths – The loyalty oath of office was administered to Mr. Joseph R. Blasch, Ms. Irene M. Boyle, Mr. Frank J. Koziol and Dr. William H. Spitz by Mr. Joseph V. Paradise.

Election of President – Mr. Webb requested nominations be presented for President of the Neshaminy Board of School Directors. Mr. Bowman nominated Mr. Eccles. There were no other nominations for President. Mr. Webb made a motion to close the nominations. Mr. Bowman seconded the motion. The Board approved the motion to close nominations with nine ayes.

Mr. Webb requested a vote for Mr. Eccles as President of Neshaminy School Board. The Board approved Mr. Eccles as President of the Neshaminy School Board by a vote of nine ayes.

Election of Vice President – Mr. Eccles requested nominations be presented for Vice President of the Neshaminy Board of School Directors. Mr. Webb nominated Mrs. Sue C. Barrett. There were no other nominations for Vice President. Mr. Eccles moved the nominations for Vice President of the Neshaminy Board of School Directors be closed. The Board approved the motion to close nominations with nine ayes. Mr. Eccles requested a roll call vote be taken. Mrs. Barrett was elected Vice President of the Neshaminy Board of School Directors with eight ayes (Mrs. Barrett, Mr. Blasch, Mr. Bowman, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Cummings, Mr. Eccles, Mr. Koziol and Mr. Webb) and one nay (Dr. William Spitz).

**Motion: Appointment of Solicitor**

Mr. Bowman presented the following motion:

**WHEREAS**, the School Board Policy #100 requires during the month of December that the Board of School Directors appoint a solicitor for a one year term.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of School Directors reappoint the law firm of Begley, Carlin & Mandio as Solicitor of the Neshaminy School District in accordance with its fee letter dated November 28, 2005.

Mr. Webb seconded the motion.

Dr. Spitz commented that he had a problem with the firms request to increase their hourly rate from \$125 to \$135. Dr. Spitz advised that this is an 8% increase, and Mr. Profy's firm received an increase last year. Dr. Spitz advised that this Board struggles to pass a fiscally responsible budget every year. Dr. Spitz feels that this will be a sending a poor message to taxpayers if the Board simply accepts this unjustified increase. Dr. Spitz noted that after this motion another motion will be presented to appoint Sweet, Stevens as counsel for labor and special education and their proposed hourly rate is only \$110 per hour. Dr. Spitz does not feel any reason to increase the rate for Begley, Carlin and Mandio. Dr. Spitz stated that he would like to amend the motion on the floor to have the hourly rate for Begley, Carlin and Mandio be \$125.

Mr. Bowman noted that Sweet, Steven, Tucker & Katz are not \$110 per hour they are \$145 per hour. Dr. Spitz noted that it is \$110 per hour for non-adversarial work, which is the great majority of the work performed by that firm.

Dr. Spitz asked the President to move the motion to amend. There was no second to the motion to amend.

Mr. Eccles commented that over the course of the last two years he has nothing but high regards for the firm that protects the district, board members and the rights of the people of this community. Mr. Eccles does not see a reason to make a change and we have gained a tremendous amount of respect and exposure with this firm's representation. Mr. Eccles noted that he takes offense to hourly wages being discussed when the professionalism comes along with it.

Mr. Bowman stated that Mr. Profy and his entire firm have done an excellent job providing general legal advice. Mr. Profy is always taking a look at tax assessments in order to gain the school district more tax revenues. Mr. Profy's advice has been dead on when it comes to appeals. Mr. Profy goes one step further in executive sessions and makes sure that what is being discussed can be discussed, or whether it should be discussed openly. Mr. Profy always makes sure that the motions the Board passes are public and accurate.

Mr. Webb also noted that not only is the district getting Mr. Profy for the fee, but his entire office.

Dr. Spitz commented that he felt the district would have Mr. Profy and his entire office, and do just as fine a job at \$125 an hour as at \$135 an hour.

The Board approved the motion by a vote of eight ayes and one nay (Dr. Spitz).

**Motion: Appointment of Special Counsel for Labor and Special Education**

Mrs. Barrett presented the following motion:

**WHEREAS**, the School Board Policy No. 100 requires during the month of December that the Board of School Directors appoint legal counsel for a one year term.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of School Directors appoint the law firm of Sweet, Stevens, Tucker & Katz for special education and labor matters for the Neshaminy School District in accordance with its fee letter dated December 2, 2005.

Mr. Bowman seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the motion.

**Motion: Appointment of Firm to Conduct Superintendent Search**

Dr. Spitz presented the following motion:

**WHEREAS**, the Neshaminy Board of School Directors wishes to conduct an immediate search for Superintendent of Schools beginning July 1, 2006.

**WHEREAS**, two firms have been interviewed to assist in conducting this search for the best possible candidates to provide future leadership to the school district.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the proposal from Dr. William Vantine and Dr. Charlie Scott be accepted to conduct this search for Superintendent on behalf of the Board of School Directors. The Agreement for the search will be at a "not to exceed" cost of \$14,000.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Business Administrator is authorized to sign this Agreement upon review and approval of the Solicitor.

Mr. Webb seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the motion.

**Motion: Approval of Board Meeting Calendar**

Mr. Eccles presented the following motion:

**WHEREAS**, the Board of School Directors must adopt and publish a schedule of Public Meetings for 2006.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the attached 2006 School Board Meeting Calendar be adopted by the Neshaminy Board of School Directors.

Mr. Bowman seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the 2006 School Board Meeting Calendar.

Mr. Bowman noted that in addition to what is listed on the calendar an additional meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 12, 2005, at which time the Board will receive a presentation from the Construction Manager and Architect in relation to the high school project. Mr. Bowman noted that a motion will be presented with regards to the Act 34 Hearing. The motion is not being presented this evening due to the fact that it is only appropriate that the new board members and community have the presentation to see exactly where the project is at the present time. Mr. Bowman noted that it will also be an important meeting in order to clear up misinformation regarding costs of the project. Mr. Bowman also stressed that there has been no delay in the project and it continues to move forward.

Mr. Wilson noted that on Monday, December 12, 2005, at 6:30 p.m. Dr. Vantine has requested an Executive Session with the Board of School Directors to begin to discuss the Superintendent search. Mr. Wilson advised that he will not be present at the meeting due to commitments out of town.

Mr. Bowman advised that the search for Superintendent will include both internal and external candidates.

Mrs. Barrett noted that the Board needs to be thinking in terms of what direction to give the search firm.

#### **Other Board Business**

Mrs. Barrett requested that Mr. Wilson prepare a report regarding student scores (PSSA) and a summary of the past two to three years. Mr. Wilson suggested discussions take place at the Work Session scheduled for Tuesday, February 14.

#### **Public Comment**

Mr. William O'Connor, Langhorne, PA, welcomed all the new Board members and wished them good luck. Mr. O'Connor wondered whether the district should be doing competitive bidding regarding the solicitors. Mr. O'Connor noted that it is one of the probably higher paying regular contracts that the district has on an annual basis. Mr. O'Connor noted that he has nothing against Mr. Profy or his firm. Mr. O'Connor stated that Mr. Profy has conducted himself as an absolute professional and gentlemen.

Mr. Howard Lindner, Langhorne, PA, congratulated the new school Board members. Mr. Lindner feels that they will be an excellent bipartisan group working for the community and senior citizens, as well as for the quality of education. Mr. Lindner feels good and can breathe better knowing that the Board will go in the direction of the entire community. Mr. Lindner stated like anything else if you have a good coach or good law firm you stay with that person or law firm. That law firm looks out for the district and community. Mr. Lindner thinks that Irene Boyle is quality, Mr. Frank Koziol is quality. God Bless all of you.

#### **Board Comment**

Mr. Bowman congratulated the new Board members and Dr. Spitz and looks forward to working with all of them.

Mr. Eccles also congratulated the new Board members. Mr. Eccles thanked everyone for their volunteer efforts to help keep this school district running in the right direction.

Mr. Eccles noted two things that need immediate attention are keeping the high school project on target and improving on student scores. Mr. Eccles stated that this district has the ability to be the best in Pennsylvania. Mr. Eccles thanked everyone for their confidence in him and keeping this Board on track.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Bowman moved the meeting be adjourned and Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Eccles adjourned the meeting at 7:30m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita E. Walls  
Board Secretary