

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
(PUBLIC MEETING)
September 27, 2005

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on September 27, 2005, in the Board Room of the 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
Mr. Jason Bowman
Ms. Carol A. Drioli
Mrs. Susan Cummings
Mr. Ritchie Webb

ADMINISTRATORS:

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

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Mrs. June R. Bostwick
Mrs. Kimberly A. Jowett

SOLICITOR:

Timothy J. Duffy, Esquire
Begley, Carlin & Mandio

SECRETARY: Mrs. Anita E. Walls

OTHERS: Approximately 21 persons from the public, staff and press

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

Miss Lauren Ramsey
Miss Melissa Stack

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

Mr. Wilson read to the public a notification received from Harrisburg regarding Plancon Part A: Project Justification and Act 34 Hearing. A true and correct copy of the document and appended materials are entered into the minutes and are attached hereto as Exhibit "A."

Dr. Muenker advised that one question was received from the community: Will the renovation and reconstruction for Neshaminy High School include a swimming pool. If not, why not?

- Dr. Muenker advised that the answer is no. The current plans do not include a new swimming pool, nor did the original plans a while back. The current facility continues to meet the district's needs regarding the swimming areas.

Mr. Eccles advised that any other questions would be addressed at the next meeting.

Dr. Spitz verified that the capacity number of 2,900 students stated in the Plancon document is for reimbursement purposes, and the scope of the project has not changed.

Public Comment

Mr. Kevin Yeingst, Feasterville, PA, thanked Mr. Paradise for assisting with the bus situation. Since that time a direct route has been established to St. Christophers. Mr. Yeingst understands that there is a group of legislators going around the area regarding the new Act 72. Mr. Yeingst would like to attend any meetings that will be held and would appreciate knowing when any meetings would occur. Also, Mr. Yeingst would like to know whether Neshaminy provides transportation to all of the Catholic schools for students who live within the district.

Mr. Solis Basen, Langhorne, PA, raised a concern about the PSSA scores. The community deserves an answer. Bristol Borough taxes are much lower than Neshaminy. Bristol High School pay scale for teachers and administration is much lower. The Neshaminy PSSA scores are as low as Bristol High School. Why is that so? Mr. Basen noted that we are spending a lot of money for a new school and the focus should be on teaching. Mr. Basen does not know the answer. There are many other things that should be looked at with the new high school project, but why is the Neshaminy High School so low in their marks. Mr. Basen congratulated the Elementary School teachers and the Administration because they are up with all the others and rightfully so.

Mr. Ed Stack, Langhorne, PA, stated that it has been a couple of years since he sat on the board. Nice additions to the school board with Lauren and Melissa as student representatives. Mr. Stack offered praise to the board since they have taken the high road when at the last meeting you responded to questions raised regarding the high school renovation project in a comprehensive fashion. Mr. Stack noted that it is a good plan and it is good that the board is able to make use of earlier investments that were made at the high school. It is too bad that these options were not worked out side by side with the new school project at that time. That is history. The board will never make everyone happy. This plan provides a good balance in meeting with what needs to be done and at an efficient cost. Make it happen and make it happen now. Delay will result in even greater costs. Remember time is money. Mr. Stack would like the board to consider the upcoming school board elections. Mr. Stack does not suggest that politics be brought into this forum, as it has no place in deciding what is ultimately best for our children and our community. In this regard the board is complimented for your actions at the last school board meeting. The reality is that politics plays a major role in determining the outcome of school board elections, and this affects the school board and this community. Mr. Stack believes that more credible information needs to be provided on the candidates for office, and what better way to accomplish this then from the school board candidates themselves. Mr. Stack suggested that in place of countless flyers with misinformation and distortion and letters to the newspapers there should be a separate televised session where the candidates themselves can advise the public of their qualifications and how they will make Neshaminy better. This can be accomplished with monitoring by an independent group like the League of Women Voters. The board is incurring costs to televise the meetings, and the taxpayers deserve to be properly informed as to the present and future affairs of the school board. Mr. Stack advised that the board has the means and the time to make this happen, but you need to act now. There is a degree of entertainment value from these school board meetings. We need to better appreciate the personalities of the candidates.

Mrs. Esther Mikus, Langhorne, PA, stated that her son takes the bus in the morning and they are sitting three to a seat. He is in ninth grade and it is very congested. When there is no room he sits on his school bag. Mrs. Mikus would appreciate if someone could look into the matter. Mrs. Mikus called transportation twice. Mrs. Mikus also noted that her other son is a third year student at GW and because of the AP classes he is able to graduate a semester early. It is available in Neshaminy and it is a very good resource for the parents. Instead of being \$80,000 in debt she will be \$70,000 in debt. Mrs. Mikus also commented on the PSSA scores, but her son in 9th grade got well advanced scores and she is very proud of the efforts given at Neshaminy. Mrs. Mikus advised that it is Bus #29 and picks up at Durham and Oakland.

Student Representative Report

Ms. Lauren Ramsey and Ms. Melissa Stack provided the following report:

- Student Council did a school wide fundraiser for the Hurricane Katrina victims.
 - ✓ Collected money at lunches.

- ✓ Drinks and ice pops were sold at football games.
- ✓ Greater Philadelphia is holding a talent show.
- Sports Up-date:
 - ✓ Football is playing against Truman.
 - ✓ Neshaminy will be presented with a Flag in memory of Lorraine Bey who was a 1961 graduate of Neshaminy and was a stewardess on PA flight on September 11th.
 - ✓ Golf, Boy's Cross Country, Field Hockey and Soccer are playing very well and are in first place.
 - ✓ School Spirit: Buttons will be ordered for the Football games that will say "Beat Pennsbury" or whatever team is being played that week. Buttons will be \$1.00.
 - ✓ Homecoming Football Game will be held on October 22nd at 1:30 p.m. and the team will be playing North Penn.
 - ✓ Homecoming Dance will be held that Saturday night with the theme "Black and White Affair" - expected attendance 400 students.
- School Lunches used to be \$2.10 and with the main menu including french fries. This year fries are no longer included. Fries are now forty cents extra. Many students are now bringing their lunch. Student council would like to work with the Food Services to make a healthier alternative so that students are paying only \$2.10.

Mr. Webb noted that the entire Food Service Program is about to change in the near future. Unfortunately, french fries will be taken off the menu in the year 2008. Further, there will be no vending machines, no regular potato chips, only baked. That is the future.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Wilson and his wife thanked the board and the Neshaminy community for their thoughtfulness during a couple of very difficult weeks. Mr. Wilson sincerely thanked everyone for their support.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Walls noted that the solicitor for the August 23rd meeting was Thomas J. Profy, III, Esquire and Thomas Profy, IV, Esquire.

Upon motion of Dr. Spitz and seconded by Mr. Bowman, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the August 23, 2005 Public Meeting. Mrs. Bostwick and Mrs. Jowett were 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:

- August, 2005 Treasurer's Report, subject to audit
- Bills for payment Check Register – August, 2005
- Escrow Fund, Capital Project Funds, Investment Funds
- Personal and Per Capita Tax Exonerations – August, 2005

Mr. Bowman moved the August, 2005 Treasurer's Report be approved, subject to audit, and the August, 2005 bills for payment, Budget, Escrow Funds, Capital Project Funds, Investments Funds and Personal and Per Capita Tax Exonerations. Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the Treasurer's Reports, subject to audit, bills for payment, investments, escrow funds, and capital project funds, personal and per capita tax exonerations. Mrs. Bostwick and Mrs. Jowett were not present.

Bids

Mr. Paradise presented the following bids for approval:

Bid No. 06-15 Reconditioning of Football Equipment

Bid Amount: \$35,100.00

The bid is for reconditioning football equipment for all four middle schools and Neshaminy High School for school year 2005-2006.

Bid No. 06-19 Above/Inground Fuel Management System (re-bid)

Bid Amount: \$15,027.16

The bid is for the purchase and installation of fuel management system at the Transportation Department.

Bid No. 06-20 Musical Instruments

Bid Amount: \$17,744.35

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

Ms. Drioli moved the bids be approved and Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the bids. Mrs. Bostwick and Mrs. Jowett were not present.

Certified and Support Personnel Actions

Dr. Muenker presented the following for approval:

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

Dr. Muenker requested approval of the personnel report as presented.

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

The Board unanimously approved the personnel report. Mrs. Bostwick and Mrs. Jowett were not present.

Motion: Tax Year 2006 Assessment Appeals

Mr. Bowman presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the Tax Year 2006 Assessment Appeals for the following Properties have been recommended by the School District Solicitor and George R. Sengpiel, MAI, SRA, Appraiser for the School District; and

WHEREAS, said appeals must be filed by the School District with The Board of Assessment Appeals of Bucks County, as required by law.

BLDG 03 Penn LLC Tax Parcel No. 22-055-193
(Walgreen Pharmacy)

Hollander Family Tax Parcel No. 22-040-026-001
(NTW Tire Shop)

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors approves the filing of the above listed 2006 Tax Year Assessment Appeals with the Board of Assessment Appeals of Bucks County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board authorizes the Business Administrator and Solicitor to file said appeals, and ratifies all actions taken by the Board President and Solicitor in connection with those appeals and to take all such other action as required by law.

Ms. Drioli seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mrs. Bostwick and Mrs. Jowett were not present.

Motion: Establishment of Money Market Bank Account

Mrs. Cummings presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, a Money Market Account is required by Commerce Bank for investments;
and

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Public School Code requires that the Board of School Directors approve all bank accounts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors authorizes the establishment of a Money Market account with Commerce Bank in the name of Neshaminy School District, Account No. 365752336.

Mr. Webb seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mrs. Bostwick and Mrs. Jowett were not present.

Motion: Easement for Ferderbar Outdoor Pool

Ms. Drioli presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the School District and the Township of Lower Southampton did, on March 29, 2001, enter into Swimming Pool Site Lease whereby the School District leased the Ferderbar School Swimming Pool to the Township for the term of thirty (30) years from and after March 1, 2001.

WHEREAS, the Township has requested the School District to grant an easement over and upon the lands of the School District adjacent to the swimming pool to permit the Township to install and maintain a handicap ramp and a five foot macadam walkway as shown on the Handicap Ramp Plan for Ferderbar School, prepared by Tri-State Engineers & Land Surveyors, Inc. dated August 9, 2004, Job No. LS-1286 last revised September 13, 2005, ("Handicap Ramp Plan").

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the School District grants an easement to the Township of Lower Southampton over and upon the lands of the School District to enable the Township to install and thereafter maintain and use the five foot macadam walkway and handicap ramp as shown on the Handicap Ramp Plan. Installation of the improvements for and use of the easement is granted upon the same terms, conditions and limitations contained in Swimming Pool Site Lease, including but not limited to the maintenance, insurance and indemnification provisions of said Lease. The terms and conditions of the easement shall be acceptable to the Business Administrator and Solicitor of the School District.

AND, IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board President and Secretary are herewith authorized to execute the easement in the name of and on behalf of the School District.

Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mrs. Bostwick and Mrs. Jowett were not present.

Federal Programs

Mr. Wilson advised that the 2005-2006 Active Federal Programs/Grant Allocation is up to \$1,740,930.00. Dr. Costanzo has done a nice job. Mr. Wilson noted that this year has had the most mundane and repetitive forms.

Other Board Business

Ms. Drioli advised that on October 20, 2005 a round table discussion will be held at Central Bucks regarding feedback from school districts concerning Act 72.

Mrs. Cummings advised that the Neshaminy Education Foundation is having their Murder Mystery Dinner on October 21st. Tickets are available and the public is invited to attend.

Public Comment

Mr. William O'Connor, Langhorne, PA, commended Mr. Eccles for taking the high road at the last meeting and led the way and took control of the meeting. Mr. O'Connor appreciated his efforts. Mr. O'Connor noted that the minutes are always available. Mr. O'Connor stated that at the Township level they are approving minutes that are six months old. Mr. O'Connor stated the minutes are available; they are placed on the website. The information packets are complete and the meetings are televised. Mr. O'Connor thanked everyone for making that available.

Mr. O'Connor noted that the No Child Left Behind Act has an effect on the PSSA scores. Mr. O'Connor has spoken with Dr. Costanzo and the district is working on the problems which exist. Mr. O'Connor urged the board to stick to their guns with the renovation project. For every delay it costs the taxpayer more money. Mr. O'Connor complimented the Board on the progress made, and encourages the Board to continue.

Board Comment

Dr. Spitz apologized for his cell phone interruption. Dr. Spitz advised that at the Educational Development meeting held last week time was devoted to the PSSA scores and some initiatives that the Math Department, specifically at the high school, is taking to address the scores and improve same. The district is committed to trying to improve the scores.

Good results have been seen in the PSSA scores at the elementary and middle school level. The high school level has made some improvement, but clearly, more improvement is needed. The Administration is committed to addressing that problem.

Mr. Eccles advised that the high school project is moving as quickly as possible. It is moving at the speed that the law will allow the district to move forward, the bureaucracy needed to go through and the steps that need to be taken.

Adjournment

Ms. Drioli moved the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Bowman seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Eccles adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Anita E. Walls
Board Secretary