

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
May 19, 2010

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on May 19, 2010, in the Auditorium at Poquessing Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Mr. Ritchie Webb, President  
Mr. Kim Koutsouradis, Vice President\*  
Ms. Irene M. Boyle  
Mr. Scott Congdon  
Mrs. Susan Cummings  
Mr. Richard M. Eccles  
Mr. Mike Morris  
Mr. William D. O'Connor  
Mr. William Oettinger

**ADMINISTRATORS:**

Dr. Louis T. Muenker  
Mr. Joseph V. Paradise  
Mrs. Patricia Boylan  
Mr. Kevin Kane

**BOARD MEMBER ABSENT:**

**OTHERS:** Approximately 200 persons from the public, staff and press

**SECRETARY:** Mrs. Jennifer Burns

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

\*Arrived at 8:30 p.m.

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Mr. Webb announced that prior to the meeting an Executive Session was held regarding personnel and legal issues.

**Call to Order**

Mr. Webb called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

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

**Announcements**

Mr. Webb announced that the Board, NFT, and the mediator, John Kerns, are reviewing dates to set up a meeting. NESPA has a negotiation meeting scheduled for May 27<sup>th</sup>, June 4<sup>th</sup>, and June 9<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Webb also stated that Mr. Koutsouradis will be joining the meeting shortly.

**Public Comment**

Chuck Torpey, Feasterville, school bus driver for Neshaminy, stated that the bus drivers from the transportation department are willing to sacrifice in order to keep their jobs. He informed the Board that he took a poll of his co-workers and found that 82% plus, agreed that they would be willing to pay 15% of the health care costs in order to save their jobs. He pleaded with the administration and the School Board to recognize that the transportation department is hard working and they want to keep their jobs. Additionally, Mr. Torpey commented to the teacher's union that they should be willing to sacrifice in order to save their jobs, just as the bus drivers are willing to do so.

Dawn Gale, Levittown, works for the YMCA, voiced her disappointment with the cancellation of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Dorney Park Field Trip. Ms. Gale felt that the proposed trip to the Camden Aquarium was not an appropriate substitution. Ms. Gale implored the Board to intervene and reinstate the 7<sup>th</sup> grade field trip to Dorney Park.

Lynn Duminiak, Lower Southampton, technology aide for Neshaminy School District, voiced her concern over the proposed cut backs in the Neshaminy School District. Ms. Duminiak stated that she feels that the support staff does not get the proper recognition that they deserve. Ms. Duminiak said that her skills and service are very important to the Neshaminy students and if she has to pay 10% towards health benefits, the reduction in salary would be a hardship for her. She further stated that she is also a taxpayer and she expects a quality education for Neshaminy students as well as a fair living wage for her.

Kirk Llewellyn, Bristol, custodian at Herbert Hoover, stated his opposition to cutting programs and reducing staff. Mr. Llewellyn recalled that in 1993 the support staff made important concessions such as a pay freeze for two years and loss of longevity for new employees hired after 1993. Mr. Llewellyn's hope is for both sides to come together in agreement for the sake of the students.

Mark Laich, Bristol, school bus driver for Neshaminy, voiced his agreement that the majority of bus drivers would support paying 15% of the health costs in order to save their jobs. Mr. Laich hopes that the School Board will reconsider the position and preserve the bus driver's jobs.

Tracey Johnson, Langhorne, expressed her support for the Family and Consumer Science Program. She stated that this is one of the most popular electives and if it were cut from the program it would be detrimental. Ms. Johnson's children participate in the nursery program and she feels that it is beneficial to the children as well as the high school students who participate.

Lynda Gatti, Levittown, stated that her children attend the nursery program within the Family and Consumer Science Program. She said that one quarter of the entire student body is enrolled in the program. Ms. Gatti feels that cutting this program would have a huge impact on the community.

Genevieve Rooney, Langhorne, Graduate of Neshaminy High School, stated that as a student at Shippensburg University the Family and Consumer Science Program gave her an advantage in her present studies. Ms. Rooney stated that the experience she has gained from coming back and observing the classroom has allowed her to refine her skills. Ms. Rooney asked the Board to reconsider any plans to cut this program.

Kim Gallo, Levittown, Office Manager, commented on a rumor that the teachers will not be attending the Academic Achievement Dinner because of the contract dispute. She expressed her disappointment that the teachers would fail to support these outstanding students in their achievements. Ms. Gallo expressed her hope that the teachers will reconsider this action and set a better example for the children.

Annamarie Miller, property owner, opened her comments by thanking the Board for their hard work and fidelity to the community. Ms. Miller voiced her approval that the Board is looking into solar panels as an energy saving endeavor. Ms. Miller proposed a cost savings suggestion to be implemented for one year. She suggested that the district adopt the "pay-to-play" fee, with the exception of any family that is approved for the meal assisted program is exempt from the fee and any family who is recommended by a staff member as being eligible for exemption. She also suggested that nonunion staff give back 1% of their pay for one year. Ms. Miller asked the union leadership to donate 50% of their dues towards helping save the jobs of their union members until the contract can be resolved.

Sandy Wilson, Penndel, transportation, expressed her concern about the lack of supervision of the students when the teachers are outside of the building on Wednesdays.

Denise Liberto, Langhorne, stated that her daughter is a senior at Neshaminy High School and she applauded the Nutrition and Fitness for Life Class and the benefits that it has brought to her family. She hopes that the Neshaminy School District will continue to offer this beneficial program for the sake of the students and community.

Michele Palmer, Levittown, homemaker and part-time employee of Neshaminy, acknowledged that the outsourcing of transportation would give the district a huge savings within the next five years. Additionally, it will bring in revenue this year by the sale of the buses. However, Ms. Palmer also listed some disadvantages of outsourcing. She stated that the district loses control over the hiring, the familiar faces that the students depend on, and the return of wages that are spent within the district. Ms. Palmer expressed her approval of the Fact Finder's Report noting that the results were close to the proposal the School Board was offering NESPA. She further remarked that the report indicated that the support staff should not have to bear the entire cost of the savings and that the School district should find savings elsewhere. Ms. Palmer offered the suggestion of cost savings by eliminating two administrators' positions. Additionally she suggested that the Board could invest the fund balance in an effort to gain interest. Ms. Palmer concluded by recommending that a member of the School Board should be assigned the task of finding ways to bring money into the district.

Scott Brigham, Langhorne, school bus driver for Neshaminy, voiced his disapproval of outsourcing the transportation department for the district. Mr. Brigham declared that this decision would be a serious mistake because the First Student buses and equipment are inferior to that of the buses that would be replaced.

Karen Campbell, Penndel, school bus driver for Neshaminy, voiced her concern and disapproval that students are being unsupervised on Wednesday mornings. Ms. Campbell fears that if the teachers continue to stand outside on Wednesday mornings there may be serious consequences. She also disapproves of the outsourcing of the transportation department.

Steve Rodos, Villages of Flower Mills, Langhorne, opened his comments by congratulating Mr. Koutsouradis on the success of reducing the Tech School Budget. Mr. Rodos voiced his disapproval of the list of 28 items suggested for cutting the budget. He further urges the Board to remember that their decision will ultimately affect families, taxpayers, and employees of the Neshaminy School District.

### **Student Representative Report**

Student Representatives were not in attendance.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Muenker advised the Board on the following:

- Neshaminy High school Drama Classes Presented the Fifth Annual Drama Nights on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and the 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 p.m. All ticket proceeds will benefit a fund for Muscular Dystrophy.
- Poquessing Music Department took 254 students on the annual Music Adjudication Trip to the Bethlehem area. The groups won a total of 25 trophies.
- Congratulations to Senior, Seth Schimmel who won a \$200 book Scholarship from TruMark financial for participating in the finance Jeopardy Challenge. Junior, Ryan Craig who will be representing Neshaminy as an FBLA National Competitor in Cyber Security in Nashville, T.N. Junior, Jocelyn Joseph who won the annual essay contest earning a prize of \$1,000.
- The Senior Prom will be held on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, at the Sheraton in Philadelphia.
- Academic Awards were presented on May 19<sup>th</sup>, at Neshaminy High School.

- The Annual Senior Awards Night will be held on June 2nd.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mrs. Burns presented the minutes of the April 20, 2010, Public Meeting and the May 4, 2010, Work Session Meeting. Upon motion of Mr. Congdon and seconded by Mrs. Cummings the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the April 20, 2010, Public Meeting and the May 4, 2010, Work Session Meeting.

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

Mr. Paradise presented the following for approval:

- April, 2010, Treasurer's Report, subject to audit
- Check Register – April, 2010
- Budget Transfer Report 10-6
- Investment Summary
- Personal and per capita tax exonerations for April, 2010.

### **Bids**

Mr. Paradise presented seven bids.

#### **Bid No. 11-02 Athletic & Physical Education Supplies**

Amount: \$70,253.96

Bid Description: Supplies for physical education programs and various team sports for the school year 2010/2011

#### **Bid No. 11-09 Classroom & Art Aid Supplies**

Amount: \$24,708.52

Bid Description: Classroom and art supplies for the 2010/2011 school year which includes: paints, drawing paper, brushes, markers, yarn, cloth, and other arts and crafts materials for classroom use.

#### **Bid No. 11-16 Football Equipment Reconditioning Services RFP**

Amount: \$22,000

Bid Description: Covers Football Equipment reconditioning services for middle and high schools programs for the 2010/2011 SY thru 2012/2013 SY with 3 one year options to renew. Prices quoted are firm for next 3 years with maximum allowed increase in last 3 years of 1% per year.

#### **Bid No. 11-18 Bituminous Concrete Paving Resurfacing at NHS**

Amount: \$22,090

Bid Description: Repaving area dug up in rear of the High School this year to repair a water leak.

#### **Bid No. 11-19 HVAC Rooftop Air Handling Equipment at MPMS**

Amount: \$194,000

Bid Description: Equipment only for two rooftop HVAC units which replace two existing 18 year old units. The rooftop HVAC units are in poor condition and require replacement.

#### **Bid No. 11-20 Installation of HVAC Rooftop Air Handling Equipment of MPMS**

Amount: \$ 75,000

Bid Description: Installation only for 2 rooftop HVAC units (purchased on Bid 11-19) replacing 2 existing 18 year old units. The rooftop HVAC units are in poor condition and require replacement. Extended 2 year warranty included in Bid for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years after installation. The Budget for this equipment is \$100,000.

**Bid No. Provident Energy Forward Electricity Contract**

Amount: \$2,180,692

Bid Description: On December 31, 2010, PECO's 14 year old "rate caps" will expire and customers will have 2 options for purchasing power in the post rate cap era: 1) stay with PECO for Default Supply at an estimated 11% higher rate that will change every month for large users of electricity, or 2) shop for electric supply from one of the many alternative Electric Generation suppliers ("EGS"). Throughout 2009, PECO has been presenting to most of their large clients indicating that their Default Supply rates will be higher and encouraged their customers to shop for EGS prices.

Mr. Eccles moved the April, 2010, Treasurer's Report be approved, subject to audit, Check Register for April, 2010, the Budget Transfer Report 10-6, Investment Summary and the Personal and Per Capita Tax Exonerations for April, 2010 be approved. Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

Mr. Webb inquired why the .35% is not put into a long term CD.

Mr. Paradise stated that the investments must comply with the school code or it would be disallowed.

Mr. Webb inquired what the length of the investment term is.

Mr. Paradise responded that the two investments that we just approved were for two months.

Mr. Webb asked the reason for the two-month investment.

Mr. Paradise responded that the district does not have enough money to invest longer than two months. He also stated that the money is invested for a short period of time with interest as opposed to gaining no interest by not investing it.

The motion passed with a vote of 8 ayes, and 0 nays. (Mr. Koutsouradis was not present.)

**Certified and Support Personnel Actions**

Dr. Muenker presented the following for approval:

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

Dr. Muenker recommended the approval of the personnel report for certified and support personnel, and the extra-curricular staff and salaries.

Mrs. Cummings moved the Certified and Support Personnel Reports and also the Extra-Curricular Staff and Salaries be approved. Mr. Eccles seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said reports. (Mr. Koutsouradis was not present.)

**Motion: Appointment of a Treasurer**

Ms. Boyle presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, each year during the month of May the Board must elect a Treasurer to serve for the year beginning July 1, 2010.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Joseph V. Paradise, Business Administrator, be appointed Treasurer of the Neshaminy Board of School Directors for the above term, beginning July 1, 2010.

Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said motion. (Mr. Koutsouradis was not present.)

**Motion: Red Cedar Drive Property**

Mr. Congdon presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, Neshaminy School District is an owner in fee simple as a tenant in common with several other school districts situated in Bucks County Pennsylvania, each having a specified undivided interest in the property consisting of land, building(s) and improvements, described as 280/302 Red Cedar Drive, Levittown, PA, and more particularly described in a certain deed dated November 25, 1977 (Deed Book 2266 page 1040), a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by this reference (hereinafter referred to as Red Cedar Drive Property); and

WHEREAS, Section 707 of the Public School Code of 1949 as amended, 24 P.S. 7-707, and in particular, Section 707 (1) expressly permits the sale of a school district of unused and unnecessary land and building by public auction after notice by publication in one or more newspapers of general circulation published within the county or the school district and in the legal newspaper in the county if one exists, once a week for three (3) successive weeks before the date fixed for the sale; and,

WHEREAS, the Red Cedar Drive Property is deemed by the Neshaminy School District to be unused and unnecessary lands and buildings as stated under Section 707 of the Public School Code of 1949 as amended, 24 P.S. 7-707; and

WHEREAS, the Board of School Directors of the Neshaminy School District wish to sell the Red Cedar Drive property to the highest bidder at a public auction conducted by the District.

NOW, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of School Directors of the Neshaminy School District hereby determines that the Red Cedar Drive Property is unused and unnecessary lands and buildings pursuant to Section 707 of the Public Code of 1949 as amended, 24 P.S. 7-707 and therefore, properly approves the sale of the property at a public auction to be conducted at a time and place to be determined in accordance with Section 707(1) of the Public School Code of 1949 as amended, 24 P.S. 7-707(1).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the School District Superintendent is authorized to take all actions necessary to effectuate the purpose of Section 707(1) of the Public School Code including all public notices related to the auction, and the School District President and Secretary are authorized and directed to execute all documents necessary to carry out the auction and sale of the Red Cedar Drive Property pursuant to the requirements of Section 707(1) of the Public School Code.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22 is hereby authorized to serve as the School District's agent for the purpose of carrying out the auction of the Red Cedar Drive Property and distributing the proceeds thereof, in accordance with School District's undivided interest in the Red Cedar Drive Property.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the School District authorizes the Bucks County Schools Intermediate Unit #22 to establish the parameters and conditions for the auction and sale of the Red Cedar Drive Property.

Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said motion. (Mr. Koutsouradis was not present.)

**Motion: New Policy #506 (Gangs)**

Mrs. Cummings presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, in order to keep District Board Policies updated and current, new policies are recommended by the administration to the Board Policies Committee for review, and

WHEREAS, recommended policies meet the requirement of Federal Law; and

WHEREAS, after review by the Board Policies Committee, the District is ready to recommend:  
New Policy 506 – Gangs

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors approve the new Policy as recommended by the School Board Policies Committee.

Mr. Congdon seconded the motion.

The motion passed by a vote of 7 ayes and 1 nay, (Mr. Morris). (Mr. Koutsouradis was not present.)

**Motion: Approval of PlanCon J- Neshaminy High School**

Mr. Webb presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, The Neshaminy Board of School Directors has embarked on a long term renovation and construction plan for the Neshaminy High School' and

WHEREAS, in order to receive the maximum reimbursement available from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the filing of certain documents during the process is required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors authorizes the Administration to submit the following:

PlanCon J: Project Accounting Based on Final Costs

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board is also approving the transmittal sheet necessary for submission of the above documents to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said motion. (Mr. Koutsouradis was not present.)

**Motion: Rejection of the Fact finder Report**

Mr. Morris presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the Neshaminy Board of School Directors recently received, in the matter of Fact Finding between the Neshaminy Educational Support Professional Association and the Neshaminy School District, the Fact Finding Report dated April 29, 2010.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors reject the report of the Fact finder as issued.

Mr. Eccles seconded the motion.

Mr. Webb requested a roll call tally. The roll call tally indicated that the motion passed by a vote of 8 ayes, (Ms. Boyle, Mr. Congdon, Mrs. Cummings, Mr. Eccles, Mr. Morris, Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Oettinger, Mr. Webb.) and 0 nays. (Mr. Koutsouradis was not present.)

### **Federal Programs**

Dr. Muenker advised the Board that the total amount from July, 2009, to April, 2010, for the Active Federal Programs/Grant Allocation is \$2,239,784.00.

### **Other Board Business**

Mr. O'Connor stated that Neshaminy High School's final choir concert is May 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. He also stated that the Drama Department is hosting an Improv Night on June 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m., and all proceeds are benefiting the fight against Muscular Dystrophy.

### **Public Comment**

Larry Pastor, Business Executive, Middletown Township, opened his comments by asking the Board when they will vote for banning teachers' strikes in the state of Pennsylvania. Mr. Pastor stated that the Board has the tools and power to balance the budget without another tax increase. He further stated that for too many years school Boards have given in to the demands of the teachers unions. Mr. Pastor said that NESPA is paying the consequences because the NFT will simply not concede in the negotiations. Mr. Pastor said he believes that the community will not accept the teacher's demands for free healthcare. He further stated that he is entirely behind the Board while they stand firm on this issue. Mr. Pastor remarked about the professionalism that Mr. O'Connor has shown in educating the community, particularly during a recent offensive public comment, which Mr. Pastor described as union intimidation. Mr. Pastor closed his remarks by mentioning a website [www.Neshaminytaxpayers.com](http://www.Neshaminytaxpayers.com), which has useful information for the Board and the community.

Rebecca Pinkhasov and Mallore Mason, both freshmen at Neshaminy High School, voiced their support about the Family and Consumer Science Program. They stated that they are both enrolled in the program and have found it to be very educational. They commented that they hope to follow their dreams and they fear that this will not happen if this program is cut.

Joseph Posey, Levittown, stated that he is opposed to outsourcing the transportation department. Mr. Posey said he witnessed outsourcing in another township and he feels that it did not work then and it will not work for Neshaminy.

Sy Goldstein, Villages of Flower Mills, Langhorne, noted that he was in agreement with Mr. Pastor's comments regarding the NFT. Mr. Goldstein said in any negotiations the participating parties should all come away with something gained. He further stated that the NFT is gaining with their retirement package. However, Mr. Goldstein noted that the NESPA, students, and School Board are not equally benefitting, as is the NFT.



Mark Shubin, Langhorne, commented that he is relatively new to Neshaminy School District and is proud to live here and feels it is a great place to live. Mr. Shubin stated that the demands of the teacher's union for free healthcare and 6% salary increase is simply not feasible given the economic climate throughout the nation. Mr. Shubin acknowledged his deep respect for teachers and the influence they have over our children. Mr. Shubin stated that the berating of the School Board by the President of the NFT was offensive and disturbing to him. However, Mr. Shubin said he feels that negotiations between the NFT and the School Board should be conducted in a public forum. He mentioned that while certain school programs are important to some groups, when the funding is insufficient the lesser important programs unfortunately, may need to be cut. In his opinion, Mr. Shubin, feels that the computer technology takes precedent over other programs, but the final decision ultimately rests with the School Board.

Danielle Foster, school bus driver for Neshaminy, Parkland, made a plea to the teachers to reconsider their demands for free healthcare, because she does not want her job to be outsourced as a result. Ms. Foster stated that she has children in the district and she is grateful for the positive influence that the teachers have had on her children. However, the future of her family is dependent on her keeping her job.

#### **Board Comment**

Mr. O'Connor thanked Poquessing Middle School for their gracious hospitality. He also commented on the nursery program at Neshaminy stating that he feels it is an amazing program. He also thanked the bus drivers who notified him the first Wednesday that the solidarity march occurred regarding the safety of the children.

Mr. Morris clarified that the reason he voted no to the New Board Policy #506 (Gangs) was that he does not believe this should be a separate policy from the bullying policy. Mr. Morris noted that it is clear to anyone that the demands of the teacher's union are unrealistic because the funding is simply insufficient.

Mr. Webb noted that a copy of the Fact Finder's Report will be posted on Neshaminy's Website.

#### **Adjournment**

Mr. O'Connor moved the meeting be adjourned and Ms. Boyle seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Webb adjourned the meeting at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Burns  
Board Secretary