

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC WORK SESSION MINUTES  
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
January 9, 2007

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public work session on January 9, 2007, in the District Offices Board Room in the Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

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

**ADMINISTRATORS:**

Mr. Paul J. Kadri  
Dr. Louis T. Muenker  
Dr. Sandra Costanzo  
Dr. Geeta A. Heble  
Mr. Joseph V. Paradise  
Mrs. Jacqueline Rattigan

**BOARD MEMBER NOT PRESENT:**

Mr. Ritchie Webb

**OTHERS:** Approximately 15 persons from the public, staff and press

**SECRETARY:** Mrs. Anita E. Walls

**SOLICITOR:**

Thomas J. Profy, III, Esquire

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

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

**3. Announcements**

Mr. Kadri advised that Mr. Webb's mother passed away and also a former graduate of Neshaminy, J. Moon, who was serving his second tour of duty in Iraq, passed away. The entire Neshaminy family sends their thoughts and condolences to these two families.

**4. Public Comment**

Mr. Sam Pozzuolo, Feasterville, PA, stated that he is concerned with the assessment testing and proficiency of Neshaminy students upon attaining the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Mr. Pozzuolo advised that Neshaminy High School is rated at a 5, Bristol High School is rated at 6, Council Rock is rated at 10, Bucks County Technical is rated at a 3. Mr. Pozzuolo noted that in 11<sup>th</sup> grade 51% are not proficient in Math, 35% are not proficient in Reading. However, 97% of these students graduate. Principals, Administrators and teachers need to join together to arrive at some solutions. Mr. Pozzuolo notes that the taxes continue to rise, however, the test scores are not rising. Students need to be able to read a newspaper or balance a check book. Mr. Pozzuolo stated that only 30% of Neshaminy graduates went on to higher education. Something is not right. The taxpayers are getting tired. A promise was made and step up to the plate. The resources are available to do same.

Mr. Steve Rodos, Villages of Flowers Mill, wished the Board a very happy new year. Mr. Rodos believes that Mr. Pozzuolo figures are incorrect. Mr. Rodos feels that the website for Neshaminy will be an excellent innovation for the district. Mr. Rodos is pleased to see that the compliance program for the high school was approved at the last meeting; however, he is not in favor of a tutoring program which includes an opt-out provision by the student. Students should be held responsible for both their actions and inactions. An opt-

out provision for students who are in dire need of tutoring is not a good idea. The No Child Left Behind Act does not give the school district the right to opt-out in the child's education and the student should not be allowed the right to opt-out.

5. **Items for Discussion**

a) High School Construction Update

Mr. Paradise advised that the Neshaminy High School project is currently in the 26<sup>th</sup> week. Mr. Paradise introduced Mr. Damian Spahr from Reynolds Construction who will provide an update on the project and address any questions that the Board may have regarding the project. Pictures will be displayed simultaneously for the public and Board to view.

Mr. Spahr presented a presentation to the Board and provided Board members with the Neshaminy High School Additions and Renovations Monthly Report #6, December 2006 which provides Board members with an overview of the project status, requisition summary, change management log, project schedule and project photos.

Dr. Spitz requested that a schematic drawing be included in future reports. Further, Mr. Paradise advised that he has requested the architect to include a document entitled the Renovation Guide which would be a 6-8 page document that would explain the project over the next three years and explain and provide a guide for the project.

Mr. Eccles requested that a similar presentation take place on a monthly basis not only for Board members but for the benefit of the public.

Board discussion ensued regarding issues with the asbestos abatement and field hockey fill and grade. The cost for upgrade work is approximately \$92,000. Discussion is taking place that these funds will be provided from the general fund and the Board will decide upon same in the future.

b) 2007-08 Budget Development

Mr. Paradise provided a copy of the working draft of the Preliminary Budget 2007-08 in accordance with Act 1. Mr. Paradise reviewed specific deadlines with Board members:

- December 13 - the local tax study commission must make a non-binding recommendation to the school board.
- January 25 - the school board must make their 2007-08 proposed Preliminary Budget available for public inspection.
- February 14 - school boards must adopt their preliminary budget proposals for FY 2007-08.
- March 13 - a school board must accept or reject the recommendation of the local tax study commission prior to March 13.
- March 16 - school directors submit referendum question to County election officials.
- May 15 - PA Primary election.
- June 10 - the school board will make its proposed final budget available for public inspection no later than June 10.
- June 30 - the school board must adopt their FY 2007 - 08 final budget.

Mr. Paradise reviewed the following sections with Board members:

- current enrollment/current enrollment projections
- summary of staff positions
- revenue sources
- budget by function
- Act 1 provisions

Mr. Paradise advised that the budget as presented allows the district to continue on the process without having to worry about a budget referendum. Neshaminy is within the allowable parameters provided by law.

Mr. Paradise advised that the budget has grown approximately \$6.8M which is similar to where the district started last year. The budget can however increase beyond that based on other legal exceptions.

6. **Items for Approval**

Dr. Heble requested Board approval for the following trips.

a) **Overnight Trips**

Trip Information distributed for the following trips was self-explanatory:

- i. Neshaminy High School Ski Club to Killington, VT – January 26-28, 2007
- ii. Neshaminy High School – Cheerleading Competition – Baltimore, MD - February 2-4, 2007
- iii. Neshaminy High School Wrestling Team to Penn State University High School Track and Field Invitational – Penn State University, State College, PA - February 16 & 17, 2007
- iv. Neshaminy High School to the Model United Nations UNA-USA – New York City, NY - May 18-19, 2007

There was Board consensus for the four trips.

b) **Approval of firm for facilities study**

Mr. Paradise advised the Board that the following two firms, KCBA Architects and McKissick Associates PC, have made presentations to the Facilities and Finance Committee regarding a district wide facilities feasibility study. Mr. Paradise advised that it would be the recommendation of the Finance Committee to hire the firm of McKissick Associates, PC to perform the study. Mr. Paradise further noted that McKissick would also supply a “GIS” demographic data study. Mr. Paradise advised that the Board will be asked to approve this at the public meeting on January 23.

c) **School Director Recognition Month**

Mr. Kadri advised that January is School Director Recognition month and thanked all the School Directors for their dedication to public service and a certificate was presented to each Board Member for his/her service.

d) **Approval of New and Revised Policies**

Mrs. Rattigan reviewed the following new and revised policies with Board members:

- New Policy #130 – Parent/Family Involvement
- Revised Policy #127 – Networked Information-Acceptable Use Policy (For Board of School Directors)
- Revised Policy #249 – (For Administration & Supervisory Personnel)
- Revised Policy #349 – (For Certified Staff)
- Revised Policy #450 – (For Non-Certified Staff)
- Revised Policy #550 – (For Students)

Mrs. Rattigan advised that the Networked Information – Acceptable Use Policies are required due to Child Internet Protection Act. The District already had policies in place; however certain language needed to be clarified.

Mr. Koziol questioned language within the policy. The language was as follows: “Users of the Internet must recognize that the District does have the authority to intercept E-Mail messages of

all users and there will be no privacy right construed by the District to exist in the statements made by using the network. These acts prohibit the unauthorized interception or disclosure of E-mail messages by third parties, as well as the appropriateness of certain material being remitted on the networks.” Mr. Profy reviewed the policies and the language within same and finds the language acceptable.

**e) Acceptance of the 2005 – 2006 Audit**

Mr. Paradise advised that any Board member who wishes to receive a copy of the General Purpose Financial Statements and Single Audit Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2006 performed by Kreisler Miller, Certified Public Accountants, may do so by completing the request form. Mr. Paradise advised that the audit will be formally accepted by the Board at the January 23 public meeting.

**f) Approval of Mandate Waivers Under Act 16**

Mr. Paradise advised that the Mandate Waiver Program permits Boards of School Directors or Boards of Control to seek waivers from compliance with certain provisions of the Public School Code, the State Board of Education regulations and standards of the Secretary of Education. Relief may be granted if the waiver will allow the school to improve its instructional program or operate in a more effective, efficient or economical manner.

Mr. Tom Sizgorich, Director of Purchasing and Receiving provided the following information:

- Waiver applications must be adopted by resolution at a regular board meeting.
- Waiver applications must be approved by PDE.
- Waiver applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and must be specific.
- Retroactive waiver requests will not be granted.
- Several schools can make joint waiver requests.
- Waivers are automatically approved if PDE does not render a decision in 60 days.
- Waivers, once granted, can last for three years before an evaluation is required.

Mr. Sizgorich advised that suggested waiver areas are raising the limit for sealed bids from \$10,000 to \$25,000 and remove exemption of construction contracts from Electronic Bidding Process.

**g) Approval of Electronic Bidding and Reverse Auction Under Act 88**

Mr. Sizgorich reviewed with Board members the electronic bidding process and reverse auction:

- Electronic submission of Bids using proprietary software package versus traditional hard copy “sealed bid.”
- Software must have capability to maintain the confidentiality of the bid until Bid opening time.
- The BCIU has been using electronic bid software sold by E School Mall for the past year.
- Commonly referred to as “Reverse Auction.”
- Reverse auction is like Ebay in reverse.
- Pre-qualified bidders log onto a system, submit their prices, see how their prices compare with competitors’ offers and then they have the ability to lower their prices within a limited period of time.

Mr. Paradise advised that both the Electronic Bidding and Reverse Auction were discussed at the Facilities and Finance Committee meeting in detail. Mr. Paradise advised that the recommendation of the committee was to move forward with the Electronic Bidding process. Further, the waiver to increase the amount from \$10,000 to \$25,000 would assist the District in operating more efficiently. The PDE would provide the final approval as to what the amount would be, i.e. \$15,200.

Board discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons for the electronic bidding.

**h) BCIU Agreement for Participation in Countywide WAN Agreement**

Mr. Kadri provided Board members with a copy of the Countywide Network Service Agreement and has the ability to access the Internet and communicate with each, etc. The districts throughout Bucks County have up until this point been accessing the Internet independently and there was no formal communication connection between the districts and the County and among the districts within the County. The Bucks County IU has received a bid for these services. Currently the school district pays money to access the Internet for a slight amount less than what is proposed in this Agreement. But rather than just getting the district's access to the Internet, the district will be receiving very fast connection to the County and access to Internet 2 without advertising. Mr. Kadri believes that this Agreement would be beneficial to the district at a reasonable cost and providing the district with areas that it now does not have access to.

Mr. Kadri advised that the contract base monthly cost will be \$2,649 (before e-rate). Mr. Kadri advised that it would be a five year agreement.

Mr. Eccles suggested that a motion would not be considered this evening, but have the motion presented at the January 23 Public Meeting. This would allow Board members time to review the agreement.

**i) Bids/Budget Transfers**

Information distributed prior to the meeting. Mr. Paradise reviewed the following bid:

**Bid No. 07-18 Chiller for Maple Point Middle School**

Bid Amount: \$93,820.00

The Chiller is 15 years old and services all the unit ventilators in the computer room and Tech Ed areas at Maple Point Middle School. The chiller is past its normal life cycle and needs to be replaced.

**Bid No. 07-19 Boilers for Maple Point Middle School**

Bid Amount: \$557,950.00

The bid is to replace the 1974 boiler and pumps in Maple Point with new more energy efficient boilers. The old boilers are beyond their useful life cycle and are inefficient. The price includes extended warranty for the burner and the hot water heater.

The two bids and Budget Transfer Report (Working Copy 07-2) will be presented for approval at the January 23 Public Meeting.

**7. Superintendent's Report**

No report.

**8. Committee Reports**

**a) Board Policies**

Mr. Bowman advised that the next meeting will take place on January 23.

**b) Educational Development**

Dr. Spitz advised that at the last meeting a review of the professional development program, presentation regarding a new course for family consumer science department, redesigned the curriculum to meet the state standards, replacement textbooks for Tech Education, update on Elementary Science adoption, AP course audit, Kids voting program, GPA for 9<sup>th</sup> graders and PSSA scores at high school level.

**c) Finance/Facilities**

No report.

**d) IU Board**

Dr. Spitz provided Board members with a handout regarding the Autistic Support Program provided by the IU and an update regarding statistics.

**e) Education Foundation**

Mrs. Cummings advised that a meeting was held on January 8. Next month the grants will be awarded to the various schools. The Neshaminy Education Foundation will be honoring Mrs. Vi Sagolla and a tile will be placed on the wall of the high school.

**f) Technical School**

Ms. Boyle advised that the Technical School is also going through the budget process and the next meeting will take place on January 22.

**g) Technology**

Mr. Blasch advised that a meeting will be scheduled in the future.

Mr. Eccles advised that Board Recognition Committee met and the Committee has received several requests for renaming facilities. Mr. Eccles feels that it could be spurred by the construction of the new high school facility. The Committee is at a loss. Numerous people have dedicated their lives to the children of Neshaminy School District and they certainly need to be recognized. Mr. Eccles advised that at Carl Sandburg a wall was dedicated to these types of recognitions. Possibly a wall could be designed at Neshaminy High School to accommodate these recognitions. Further thought needs to take place on the subject. Mr. Blasch noted that there is an existing Board Policy regarding the issue and should be reviewed and directed to Policy Committee.

**9. Future Topics**

None.

**10. Agenda Development for the January 23 Public Board Meeting**

**11. Other Board Business**

Dr. Spitz noted that the PSBA Conference will take place on February 25-26 in Hershey, PA. Any Board Members interested in attending should make reservations by January 23 by contacting Debby Spadaccino.

**12. Adjournment**

Mr. Bowman moved that the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Blasch seconded the motion. The Board approved the motion with eight ayes. Mr. Eccles adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Anita E. Walls  
Board Secretary