

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
(WORK SESSION)  
April 4, 2006

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on April 4, 2006, in the Board Room of 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 R. Blasch  
Ms. Irene M. Boyle  
Mrs. Susan Cummings  
Mr. Frank J. Koziol  
Dr. William H. Spitz  
Mr. Ritchie Webb

**ADMINISTRATORS:**

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

**BOARD MEMBER NOT PRESENT:**

Mr. Jason Bowman

**SOLICITOR:**

Thomas J. Profy, IV, Esquire

**SECRETARY:**

Mrs. Anita E. Walls

**OTHERS:** Approximately 10 persons from the public, staff and press

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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. Webb made a motion to amend the agenda to include a request for Board approval of an overnight trip to Seven Springs, Champion, PA for students to attend the PA TSA State Conference. Mr. Blasch seconded the motion. All board members were in favor of adding the trip to the agenda.

Mr. Wyatt presented the following:

**Overnight Trip**

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

- Neshaminy High School trip to Seven Springs in Champion, PA, April 19-22, 2006 for students to attend the PA Technology Student Association State Conference.

There was Board consensus for the trip. Mr. Bowman was not present.

Mr. Eccles announced that Mr. Bowman had a family appointment this evening and would not be in attendance this evening.

#### **4. Public Comment**

Mr. William O'Connor, Langhorne, PA, stated that at the last meeting Mr. Eccles made a plea for cooperation between the two governing bodies of Neshaminy School District and Middletown Township as it relates to the Neshaminy High School Project. Like many people Mr. O'Connor has been involved in projects in the corporate world and there are two things that commonly happen whenever problems arise. First, everyone on one side assures themselves that they have done everything possible, and second, the other party is being an unreasonable jerk. Unfortunately, we are saying we have done everything possible and so is the Township. The district is the project manager and is reasonable for the project. It falls upon the district to manage expectations and probably that is the only thing that has not been done to Middletown Township's liking. Issues need to be worked out. Whether we agree is irrelevant at this time. The problem has grown into something much more than just those issues. Now problems are arising with trust. Many people are now skeptical. If anyone thinks the answer is addressing the 63 points in Middletown's letter, the problems will only become larger. Projects like these never fail because people are not working hard. Communication problems become a major concern, and not lack of effort. Mr. O'Connor urged the district to manage the expectations of Middletown Township. Offer to meet with them. After the meeting lights go off do everything you can to reach out to people and try to break down the barriers of communication that right now inhibit this project from potentially moving forward. No one wants this project to fail. Certainly not the thousands of current and future Neshaminy High School students. Keep trying. Hopefully, we will get beyond this point and continue to build the school.

Mr. Solis Basen, Langhorne, PA stated that he attended the Constitution Center in Philadelphia and a group of children from the Ferderbar Elementary School were there. Mr. Basen was very proud that he is a resident of Neshaminy School District. The children behaved beautifully and it is a compliment to the Administration.

Mr. Steve Rodos, Langhorne, PA, urged that the best interests of Neshaminy School District would be served by the appointment of a Superintendent from within the ranks of the Neshaminy School District. The core of the staff would be strengthened by this type of an appointment. Mr. Rodos urged the Board to appoint a Superintendent from the qualified Administrators that are currently within the District.

#### **5. Items for Discussion**

##### **a) 2006-2007 Working Draft Budget**

Mr. Paradise provided Board members with a copy of the 2006-2007 Working Draft Budget. Mr. Paradise reviewed 2006-2007 Budget Development Points of Interest.

- Budget discussed with Finance Committee on March 27<sup>th</sup>

- Working draft document will be presented on April 4<sup>th</sup>
- Preliminary Budget Document will be presented on May 17<sup>th</sup>
- Final Budget approval will take place on June 20<sup>th</sup>
- Budget Calendar – internal process began on October 12, 2005
- Zero based budget - built each year from the “ground up”
- Current enrollment projections vs. projected enrollments – total enrollment projection is down to 9,122 students for next year
- Per pupil allocations - \$137-\$147 per pupil elementary/\$185 middle/\$252 high school for a total of \$1,743,638
- Staffing – 2.5 teaching position increase

#### **Revenues**

1. Estimated 1% increase in assessment values
2. Local Tax Receipts very healthy – indicative of healthy local economy
3. Income from Investments - \$750,000 increase next year, and 136% increase over last 2 years
4. PA Basic Subsidies – 2.5% in basic subsidy
  - Others very similar to current levels except for rental payments due to increased debt expenditures
  - Accountability Grants up \$140,000
  - FICA/Medicare & PSERS up \$900,000

#### **Expenditures**

1. Employee Salaries – per existing Collective Bargaining Agreements
  - Support 3.25% increase in hourly rates
  - Certified 2.75% plus step (4.5%)
  - Reduced Class Sizes – elementary level
    - K from 24 to 23
    - Pre-First from 18 to 17
    - Grade 1 from 25 to 24
    - Grade 2 from 26 to 25
    - Grade 3 from 27 to 26
    - Grades 4 & 5 – 29 (no change)
    - Grades 6, 7, 8 – average of 18
    - Grades 9, 10, 11, 12 – average of 20
2. Employee Benefits
  - Health Insurance – prepayment discount will increase
  - Smallest total cost increase in years – 2.17%
  - Social Security/Medicare – increase of 6.12% or almost \$400,000
3. PSERS Contribution increased according to existing law 2.3% to 3.3%
  - State shares in cost 50/50
4. Other Increases
  - IU Special Education
  - Electricity – cost of fuel
  - Contracted IU Transportation
  - Charter Schools

- Tuition Private Schools
  - Bucks County Technical School
  - Fuel Oil
  - Diesel Fuel
5. Increase in Debt Service for Neshaminy High School bond issue
- First year of 2 years of increases in annual debt service
  - \$1.8 M expenditures LESS \$349,000 revenue
  - Net of \$1,484,915
  - Budget includes an additional \$500,000 contribution to Capital Reserve Fund bringing the total to \$2,000,000 plus interest
  - Budget includes a \$400,000 Contingency Reserve
- **Concerns developing that these budgets may not be sufficient given recent increases in oil prices.**

Mr. Paradise provided Board members with a Potential Effect on Tax Millage worksheet which showed that if the budget was adopted as presented at this time there would need to be an additional 7.4 required mills.

Mr. Paradise noted that the Fund Balance is higher than anticipated as of June 30, 2005.

- Exceeds 8% but we are not yet exactly sure
- \$14.6 M less whatever we use from current 05-06 budget

**b. NESACC/Neshaminy Kids Club Lease Renewal**

Mr. Paradise advised that the Neshaminy Kids Club provides before and after school care for the elementary schools. They currently have an existing agreement and it was for a two year extension. The Club is asking for a three year extension. Mr. Paradise noted that they are working out of eight schools. Mr. Paradise further advised that the Kids Club is paying \$30,240 for the current school year. Increases should take place over the next two years. \$25 per school, per day for the first year and \$28 per school, per day for the second year.

Mr. Eccles is concerned that other youth organizations within the community are being charged greater fees for the use of buildings that are non-profit organizations. Mr. Eccles believes that there is a severe inequity with the use of the buildings. Neshaminy Kids Club is a non-profit organization.

**6. Items for Approval**

**a) BCIU #22 Special Education Contracted Services for 2006-2007**

Mr. Wilson reviewed the costs that the intermediate unit charges with Board members. The IU budget is about \$6.3M for the upcoming school year. Said contracted services will be voted upon at the public meeting.

**b) Revised 2005-2006 School Calendar**

Mr. Wilson noted that the students will finish on June 16<sup>th</sup>. Faculty will finish on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Graduation is scheduled for June 14<sup>th</sup>, alternative rain date of June 15<sup>th</sup>. The Board's approval is necessary since the calendar has changed. Dr. Costanzo noted that the faculty will have inservice days the last days of school June 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**c) Approval of Bank Accounts**

Mr. Paradise noted that a motion will be on the public meeting agenda which will approve the bank accounts with Citizens Bank.

**d) 2006-2007 Bucks County Technical High School Budget**

Mr. Wilson noted that each Board member should have a copy of the Tech School Budget book. Neshaminy will have a projected 305 students attending the Tech School. All Neshaminy slots will be used. Neshaminy's contribution to the Tech School budget is \$3,680,486.

Mr. Webb feels that the Administration did not work as hard as they could have to decrease the budget. Mr. Koziol stated that the budget increase began at 12.7% and there was an attempt to bring the budget down to 4%. Neshaminy's increase will be \$553,000, partly because of the new formula.

Ms. Bolye noted that there is almost a 19% increase in benefits and 58% increase in purchases.

**e) Approval of Revised Policies**

- **Policy #536 – Administration of Medication**
- **Policy #537 – Administration of Medical Treatment**

Mrs. Rattigan provided Board members with the board policies. These policies were required to be revised by law. The changes in bold italics are the changes that are recommended. The statements provided are required by law. Mrs. Rattigan noted that all the changes were recommended by the lead nurse.

Ms. Boyle inquired whether the person using the inhaler would need to contact the nurse after each use. Mrs. Rattigan responded in the affirmative.

Mrs. Cummings inquired whether the students will have the inhalers in their possession. After use the students must report same to the nurse.

**f) Bids/Budget Transfers**

Information distributed prior to the meeting. Mr. Paradise reviewed the following bids and advised that the four bids would need approval at the end of the month.

Bid No. 07-02 Athletic & Physical Education Supplies

Bid Amount: \$81,386.79

The bid is for supplies for physical education programs and various team sports for the school year 2006/2007.

Bid No. 07-05 Transportation Parts Supplies

Bid Amount: \$42,848.46

The bid is for various supplies for the maintenance of District vehicles for school year 2006/2007. Quantities on this bid are estimated. The actual quantities purchased may vary from this estimate but will not exceed the total recommended for award.

Bid No. 07-06 Magazine Subscriptions

Bid Amount: \$12,757.68

The bid is for magazines for school libraries, curriculum library, and classroom instruction for school year 2006/2007.

Bid No 07-10 Bituminous Concrete Paving, Resurfacing and Repair

Bid Amount: \$89,039.00

The bid is for bituminous concrete paving, resurfacing and repair at Carl Sandburg/Albert Schweitzer Complex.

Budget Transfer Report 06-3 (Working Copy) will be presented for approval at the April 18<sup>th</sup> public meeting.

7. **Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Wilson advised that the students who attended the Quebec trip were very well behaved and compliments were received. Mr. Wilson commended all the people involved with the students and the trip to Quebec.

8. **Committee Reports**

a) **Board Policies Committee**

Mr. Blasch advised that in addition to the two policies which were reviewed this evening for approval the next thing on the agenda is the discipline code. A Board Policy meeting will take place on April 20<sup>th</sup>.

b) **Educational Development**

Dr. Spitz advised that a meeting took place on Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. The Committee saw a presentation regarding the electronic grade book and ties into the Parent's Access Module. It will be phased in this upcoming year. The committee also discussed the MPC Course in offering help with the PSSA scores which would be primarily funded through grants.

Mrs. Barrett believes that Science will be included in the PSSA testing. Mrs. Barrett feels that the nation is narrowing the curriculum in order to meet standards in Math/Reading.

**c) Finance and Facilities**

Mr. Webb advised that a meeting is scheduled for April 20<sup>th</sup>.

**d) Intermediate Unit Board**

No report.

**e) Educational Foundation**

Mrs. Cummings advised a Spring Raffle is taking place and the drawing will take place on May 5<sup>th</sup>. All the proceeds go back to the students in the form of grants.

**f) Tech School**

Ms. Boyle advised that the meeting is scheduled for April 24<sup>th</sup>.

**g) Technology**

Mr. Koziol advised that a meeting took place this evening and the committee continues to work on a comprehensive plan.

**9. Future Topics**

**10. Agenda Development**

**11. Other Board Business**

Mr. Koziol inquired regarding the SAGE program and whether Neshaminy had a program up and running. Mrs. Barrett noted that a \$1500 grant and \$500 was set aside to defray the costs of the background checks. The Board never did make a final decision regarding the program.

Mrs. Barrett feels that the district needs to institute the SAGE program. Seniors are welcome into the schools and they have so much to offer.

Mr. Eccles advised that the contract language is being examined by the Solicitor.

Mrs. Barrett noted that SAGE is a \$5,000 expense to the District and a further expense on a yearly basis will also exist.

Mr. Eccles noted that the board should revisit the topic when the Solicitor provides us with the updated information.

Mrs. Barrett would like to see the matter placed on the upcoming agenda.

Mr. Wilson noted that exclusivity is also an issue and Mr. Profy is researching the issue.

12. **Adjournment**

Mr. Koziol moved the meeting be adjourned and Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Eccles adjourned the meeting at 8:29 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Anita E. Walls  
Board Secretary