

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
(WORK SESSION)  
June 7, 2005

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on June 7, 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  
Mrs. Susan Cummings  
Ms. Carol A. Drioli  
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:**

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**

The Board acknowledged Robert McCartney, Camera Technician, who will be graduating from Neshaminy High School. Mr. Eccles on behalf of the Board thanked Robert for his fine work in the television production of the public meetings.

**4. Public Comment**

Mr. Kevin Yeingst, Feasterville, PA hoped that when the Board makes its decision regarding the Tawanka Learning Center the bottom line is not the only deciding factor, because the 26 students are receiving a wonderful education and turning around their lives. What this district is able to do for these students needs to be considered. The students and staff should be commended for the work that has been done at this facility. Mr. Yeingst would also like to see the Board go to the legislators regarding Act 72 and taxes. Mr. Yeingst feels that possibly a task force would help in this situation.

Ms. Drioli stated that she has sat on the Neshaminy School Board for twelve years and she has never ran away from a vote or controversial issue. Ms. Drioli noted that she did request this Board not to have a specific meeting due to the fact that she was going to be unable to attend. Ms. Drioli would like the public to know that she does not run from difficult decisions or votes.

**5. Items for Discussion**

a) **Tech School Auditorium**

Mr. Wilson announced that the Tech School is looking for approvals to build a new auditorium. In order to build this auditorium it will not cost the district any additional monies, however, it will extend the life of the loan an additional two years for the Tech School financing. Mr. Wilson noted that the Tech School is in dire need of an auditorium.

Dr. Spitz noted that this item was discussed at the Finance and Facilities meeting. Dr. Spitz noted that each Board member received a packet containing the rationale for the Tech School auditorium. The Tech School Authority has looked into possible ways to finance the project, and one would be to refinance the existing debt and receive a lump sum payment of \$1.5 million, and the balance would be paid for by extending the term of the debt service by two years.

Dr. Spitz noted that the cost for Neshaminy taxpayers would essentially be paying an additional \$782,000 in years 2017 and 2018.

Dr. Spitz noted that all six sending districts would need to vote in favor of the project. Bristol Township has already voted in favor of the project.

Dr. Spitz inquired whether there was consensus from the Board to put this as an agenda item for the next meeting. Board discussion ensued regarding the issue.

There was Board consensus to place same on the agenda for the next public meeting.

#### 6. Items for Approval

a) **Tax and Revenue Anticipation Note**

Mr. Paradise advised that the Tax and Revenue Anticipation Note will be in the neighborhood of \$12M to \$14M. This Note is required for the pre-payment of the Blue Cross premium for the district employees.

Board discussion ensued regarding possibly getting bids from other insurance carriers. Mr. Wilson noted that a Health Care Committee would need to be established and discussions would need to take place with the bargaining unit.

b) **2005-2006 Bucks County Technical School Budget**

Dr. Spitz advised that Board members received a copy of the approved budget in the packet.

c) **Year End Motions**

- ✓ **Approval of Budgetary Increase for Federal and Other Programs (2004 - 2005)**
- ✓ **Approval of Year End Budget Transfers**
- ✓ **Facilities Professional Services/Consultants for 2005-2006**

Mr. Paradise advised that these motions will be presented for the Board's approval at the end of the month.

d) **Bids/Budget Transfers**

Information distributed prior to the meeting.

Bid No 06-14 Asbestos Abatement at Poquessing Middle School

Bid Amount: \$98,000.00

Removal of asbestos from tile and associated mastic and acoustic ceiling surfacing material from 2 story classroom section of Poquessing Middle School.

e) **Adoption of Budget for 2005-2006**

Mr. Paradise provided Board members with handouts regarding the upcoming budget for 2005 – 2006. Mr. Paradise noted reductions which have been made since the Preliminary Budget on May 18, 2005 which total an additional \$2.2M in savings for the District. Mr. Paradise noted that at the present time an additional 3.96 mills would be required. The increase for the average residential assessment of \$27,080 would equate to \$107.00 additional tax dollars.

Mr. Paradise advised Board members that \$5M would be used from the Fund Balance to balance this year's budget. Currently, the district's Fund Balance is at approximately \$9M.

Mr. Eccles inquired whether Mr. Paradise had worked on the SWAP. Mr. Paradise has communicated with PFM and they have agreed to come to a Board meeting and present the pros and cons of a SWAP. If the district proceeds with a SWAP their fee for services would be \$20,000. If the district does not proceed with a SWAP PFM would not charge the district any fees.

There was Board consensus to move forward with the Financial Advisor regarding the SWAP.

## **7) Superintendents Report**

Mr. Wilson advised that Anthony Federov visited Maple Point Middle School and the students enjoyed his visit. Mr. Wilson advised that the swim team has had its best year ever. Girl's Softball is doing well and the Track season was outstanding. Boy's baseball is still alive and will play the semi-finals later this week. The Problem Solvers did well at the University of Kentucky. Mr. Wilson advised that the music programs just win where ever they go. New band uniforms will hopefully be finished by next year.

Mr. Wilson noted that the Task Force is completed. Focus groups and counselors have been meeting with students and talking with them. Mr. Wilson noted that most of the people on the Task Force are outside people making honest recommendations for students. Mr. Wilson thanked the Board for its continued support.

## **8) Committee Reports**

### **a) Board Policies**

Mr. Bowman advised that there was no report.

### **b) Educational Development**

Dr. Spitz advised that a meeting took place on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **c) Finance/Facilities**

Mr. Webb advised that budget discussions have already taken place.

### **d) IU Board**

Mr. Drioli advised that there was no report.

### **e) Educational Foundation**

Mrs. Cummings advised that the Spring Raffle was a huge success raising over \$2,000. Mrs. Cummings thanked all the representatives at the schools for selling the tickets and Mrs. O'Connor for transporting the basket from school to school.

Mrs. Cummings advised that the Fall Fundraiser will take place on October 21<sup>st</sup> at Kings Caterers. The theme for the evening will be "A Murder Mystery."

### **f) Technical School**

No report.

- g) Technology**  
No report.

**9) Future Topics**

**10) Agenda Development for the June 21, 2005 Public Meeting**

**11. Other Board Business**

Mrs. Cummings congratulated the Poquessing Middle School Music Department for all their accomplishments in Hershey, PA on May 20<sup>th</sup> with 256 students participating in the 2005 Music Showcase Festival. Mrs. Cummings thanked the directors, Mr. Stoneback, Mr. Leigh, Ms. Hurd and Mr. Weiner.

Mr. Eccles noted that Mr. Al Durante was honored at Carl Sandburg for his volunteerism.

Mr. Eccles stated that he has looked at the upcoming budget and 85% is personnel costs which is approximately \$124M. Mr. Eccles stated that this district and community needs concessions. For this district to grow and continue to provide the programs concessions will be needed from the support staff, certified staff and administration. Mr. Eccles respects and admires the positions of our staff. Our children are our greatest commodity, but we will not be able to provide the services that we do in years to come without concessions.

Dr. Spitz congratulated the Administration on the Senior Prom.

Dr. Spitz noted that Mr. Wilson is planning on retirement in June, 2006 and the Board needs to start thinking about a successor. Dr. Spitz feels that internal and external candidates should be considered. Dr. Spitz provided Board members with a handout with possible approaches to the search process.

Mr. Webb stressed that there are several qualified candidates within the district to be given first consideration for the position.

Dr. Spitz questioned whether the district would like to engage the services of a search consultant.

Mr. Eccles suggested that a committee be formed and any interested Board members should contact Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Webb noted that a letter was received from the Friends of Idlewood. Mr. Webb toured the area and damage is being done to the location. Damage is occurring to an outdoor classroom.

**12) Adjournment of Meeting**

Mr. Bowman moved the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Webb seconded the motion. The Board approved the motion with seven ayes. Mr. Eccles adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita E. Walls  
Secretary

