

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
(WORK SESSION)  
May 11, 2006

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on May 11, 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  
Mr. Jason Bowman  
Ms. Irene M. Boyle  
Mrs. Susan Cummings  
Mr. Frank J. Koziol  
Dr. William H. Spitz  
Mr. Ritchie Webb

**ADMINISTRATORS:**

Dr. Louis T. Muenker

**SECRETARY:**

Mrs. Anita E. Walls

**SOLICITOR:**

Thomas J. Profy, III, Esquire

**OTHERS:** Approximately 14 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. Eccles announced that the meeting this evening was for informational purposes regarding the high school construction bids.

4. **Public Comment**

Mr. Steve Rodos, Langhorne, PA, urged Board members to hire a Superintendent from within the district. Mr. Rodos urged Board members to accept the most responsible bids and get the project moving forward without further input. Mr. Rodos would like to see a wing added for the Tawanka students at the high school.

Mr. Fred Tomlinson, Langhorne Manor, PA, advised the Board that he is an employee of Siemens who is the company who provides the district's environmental controls. Mr. Tomlinson advised that his company is \$130,000 lower than the next responsible bidder

and he hopes the Board considers Siemens as a deduct and put the money to good use in some other area.

## 5. Items for Discussion

### a) Preliminary Review of High School Construction Bids (opened May 9)

- Walt Tack, Reynolds Construction Management
- David Maroney, ATS&R Architects

Mr. Tack distributed Bid Tabulation information to Board members.

Mr. Tack advised Board members of the following:

- 75 contractors bid the project
- project was advertised in newspapers and construction journals
- the construction market is extraordinarily busy at this time
- Southeast Pennsylvania region is picking and choosing work
- Virtually all the bids came in close to budget or under budget
- Drywall and Acoustic Ceilings did not receive any bids and will need to be rebid
- General Trades Construction only had one bidder – Bid is \$6M over budget
- Other contractors were concerned about the time frame of the project and keeping costs
- The project is less than 8% over budget and Neshaminy is in better shape than other school districts within the area

Mr. Tack advised that Board members could reject the General Trades Construction bid; however, this would make the scheduling of the project fall behind. The drywall bid will need to be rebid. Timing is essential. Loosing two weeks time could be detrimental to the asbestos abatement phase of the project.

Mr. Tack stated some of the concerns of contractors when bidding the project where as follows:

- Length of project being 3+ years
- Holding prices for that time period
- Material escalation
- Phasing of project is difficult

Dr. Spitz noted that the 8% only applies to the new construction portion of the project. Site work is not included in the current analysis.

Mr. Tack spoke with the Department of Education and their position is that the School Board cannot approve award of the bids or issue letters of intent until all the bids are received. Dr. Spitz is also under the understanding that final awards cannot be given until final approval is received from the Township. Currently, the traffic study is being considered by the Township. Dr. Muenker advised that the PDE is awaiting closure to the

traffic study item. The district has met all the requirements to the Township regarding the traffic study and is awaiting the conclusions of the traffic study.

Mr. Bowman requested that a representative from the district contact the Township Manager regarding the issues with the traffic study.

Mr. Profy stated the following:

- a) the Board cannot award contracts at this point and time
- b) the Board could decide to reject one or more of the contracts
- c) the Board must authorize the rebidding of the drywall and acoustic tile

Mr. Profy advised that the Board is not in a position to award even on the preliminary or conditional basis the contracts until PDE sees the entire package for the project.

Mr. Webb asked Mr. Tack to provide a recommendation as to the rebidding of the general trades construction portion of the project. Mr. Tack did some preliminary work on the topic but will continue to press hard this week to see if any further contractors could be obtained for bidding.

Mrs. Barrett suggested carving out the contract and bidding separately. Mr. Tack noted that this could be very difficult.

Mrs. Barrett suggested that Reynolds could act as general contractor. Mr. Tack responded that it would be a conflict of interest and the Department of Education would not permit that to happen.

Mr. Bowman feels that it is not in the best interest of the district to complicate the bids any further.

Mr. Tack advised that a delay in the project will offer contractors with the ability to issue delay claims.

Dr. Spitz inquired as to whether there was any concern with who the low bidders are. Mr. Tack was confident that the contractors are competent and have done school work in the past. Mr. Tack is familiar with the contractors and has worked with most of them at an earlier date.

Mr. Webb noted that most of the contractors which were low bidders are within a twenty-five to thirty mile area.

Mr. Tack directed Board members to the Alternates Summary section and the base bid figure should read \$66,415,902 before insurance is added. The base bid with insurance is \$67,924,902 but that does not include the carpets or modular classrooms.

Mr. Tack advised that the district was looking into the possibility of the school district would but the worker's compensation and general liability insurance, however, with the contractor's providing their own insurance it was about \$500,000 less expensive.

Mr. Tack proceeded to review the Alternates Summary with Board members. Mr. Tack noted that in the Gym areas painting, replacing the gym floors, new ceilings, and permanent motors to the bleachers would be part of the alternate. Mr. Tack stated that a bid was not received for the acoustical ceilings at the present time. The clock tower located in the middle of the main street of the building. Mr. Tack noted that fixed windows would be more desirable in this type of building situation since opening and closing of windows can cause energy waste in a building that is climate controlled. From a maintenance and operable standpoint fixed windows are more desirable. Mr. Tack noted that every classroom would have its own thermostat. Buildings are designed to maintain a certain pressure differential between the inside and the outside. Opening windows starts to play with those pressure differentials. Codes require that a significant amount of outside air will be circulated throughout the building at all times. Air is constantly changing within the building.

Mr. Tack noted that the library and cafeteria area windows will not be replaced in an effort to save costs.

Plastic laminate faced cabinets will be used in the science labs since there will be a savings of \$86,000. Ceramic tiles in the bathroom facilities was initially thought to be a nice feature, however, due to budget restraints epoxy paints will be used. Automatic temperature control systems provided by Siemens would provide a \$135,000 savings. Mr. Minotti believes that he can maintain the Novar system less expensively because he can do more of the work himself. Currently in Gym A the heating system is being replaced and will be mounted on the roof and no air conditioning would be provided in the gym areas. Similarly, in Gym 3 the same situation would occur. The units are getting up in years and the life expectancy is not much longer.

Mr. Tack advised board members that automatic flush valve sensors for the toilets would be hooked up to transformer for power and would require less maintenance than regular flushing toilets. A clean agent fire extinguisher system for the computer room which would be less destructive to the computers if a fire were to occur. For security reasons a closed circuit TV system could be added to the facility. The base bid has three cameras at the main entrance. The alternate would provide additional cameras throughout the building.

Sound field speakers for hearing impaired students would include four speakers. It does not include the headsets for the teachers. Dr. Muenker noted that this system would be very beneficial to the building and the district is required to provide same for hearing impaired students. Mrs. Barrett noted that she has experienced that the learning codes have improved due to the sound field speaker systems.

Board members discussed the alternates. Mr. Tack noted that some of the alternates would affect the 8%. Mr. Bowman would like to see the air conditioning units within the gyms. Ms. Boyle was concerned with the stationary windows.

Board members expressed that they would need time to digest the alternates in order to make an educated decision regarding same.

Mr. Tack advised board members that a formal motion would be needed to rebid the drywall contractor portion of the project and the board would need to decide whether to rebid the general contractor portion of the project.

Mr. Webb hoped that Mr. Tack would provide a recommendation to the Board regarding the rebid of the general contractor by next week.

Mr. Maroney advised board members that contracting in the state of Pennsylvania is a complex situation at the present time. Contractors are very busy and pricing for projects are running over budget. Timing of this project is very critical. Every week is a necessity to this project and rebidding could jeopardize the progress of the project.

Mr. Tack advised board members that these are the alternates and it would be at the board's discretion to add or delete any of the above items.

**6. Adjournment**

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

Respectively submitted,

Anita E. Walls  
Board Secretary