

NORTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regular Meeting
Board Minutes

Slatington, PA
May 1, 2006

PURPOSE

The regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors was called to order by the President, Mrs. Lauren A. Ganser, at 7:40 p.m. on Monday, May 1, 2006 in the senior high school auditorium.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Mr. Franklin D. Beers, Mr. Donald H. Dengler, Mr. Bryan C. Dorshimer, Mr. Raymond J. Follweiler, Jr. , Mrs. Sheryl A. Giles, Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr., Mr. Peter A. Ruth, Mr. Gregory S. Williams, Mrs. Lauren A. Ganser (9)

Members absent: None (0)

Non-members present: Dr. Nicholas P. Sham, Mrs. Lynne Fedorcha, Mr. Philip Bertolino, Mr. Robert Kern, Dr. Linda Marcincin, Mrs. Karen Nicholas, Mr. John Hrizuk, Mr. David Papay, Mr. John Fidelibus, Mr. Brian Geiger, Ms. Christine Stafford, Atty. Charles Stopp (Solicitor), Atty. Keith Strohl (Solicitors Office), Ms. Laurie Newman-Mankos, Mrs. Andrea Madochick, Ms. Jessica Fidler, Mr. Nathan Hunsicker, Mrs. Doneta J. Merkle

VISITORS

Approximately twenty-five visitors attended the meeting, in addition to Joel Kern, reporter for The Times News

PUBLIC COMMENT

Donna Kulp – Washington Township – Asked permission to reserve the right to comment on any agenda item.

Susanne Hegedus – Peters Elementary Teacher – Asked permission to reserve the right to comment on any agenda item.

APPROVE MINUTES

Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Follweiler, that the minutes of the regular school board meeting held on April 3, 2006 and the regular school board meeting held on April 19, 2006 be approved and ordered filed.

YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green, Mr. Ruth, Mr. Williams, Mrs. Ganser (9)

NAY: None (0)

SPECIAL BOARD REPORTS

Lehigh Career and Technical Institute – Mrs. Sheryl A. Giles

Mrs. Giles reported on the following topics: Academic Academy, Emerging Health Professions, Universal Design and she identified students from our district who placed in the Skills USA Competition.

Legislative Report – Mr. Gregory S. Williams

Mr. Williams reported on Act 39 stating that nothing much has been happening. He reported on the Legislative Breakfast he recently attended.

Lehigh Carbon Community College – Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr.

Mr. Green reported that the community college “pulled the plug” on its alternate funding proposal because five districts have approved it, four rejected it, and four were waiting for more information.

Committee Reports and/or Meetings

The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on April 26, 2006 were distributed.

Student Representatives to the Board Report – Ms. Jessica Fidler and Mr. Nathan Hunsicker distributed a written report for the month and reported on it's contents.

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Nicholas P. Sham, Sr.

Dr. Sham introduced Mrs. Nicholas, Peters Elementary Principal, who distributed an invitation to all board members and administrators inviting them to a Head Start luncheon at 11:45 a.m. on May 31, 2006 at the Peters Elementary School.

**SPECIAL
BOARD
REPORTS**
(Con't.)

Dr. Sham asked Mrs. Nicholas to introduce the kindergarten teachers who were in the audience. Susanne Hegedus, a kindergarten teacher, addressed the board on behalf of the team of teachers with concerns that they had with the fact that the board was considering cutting the kindergarten program. Mrs. Ganser assured them that there are some misconceptions with regard to this situation, stating that cutting kindergarten was not an issue with the board. Mr. Williams also addressed the issue stating that he was sorry for any stress this misunderstanding may have caused the teachers. He also reiterated that cutting kindergarten was not an option for the board.

Dr. Sham announced that an invitation was received for the dedication of a new greenhouse at Slatington Elementary. Unfortunately this dedication is on May 11, the same night that the Community Relations Committee is holding a special meeting.

He announced that an Ag Fair will be held at the Slatington Elementary School on May 12, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. All board members are invited to this event.

Executive
Session

There was an Executive Session for personnel issues at 6:30 p.m.

PERSONNEL

Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dengler, that the Board of Education approves the following personnel item:

Appointment

Nancy Wagner*
Assignment:

Personal Care Assistant, Peters Elementary School
Kindergarten Classroom
New Position – Funded through Medical Access
6 ½ Hours Per Day/5 Days Per Week

Salary: \$9.93 Per Hour
Effective Date: May 2, 2006

Position will terminate if child is no longer residing in our district.

*60 Day Probationary Period

YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green,
Mr. Ruth, Mr. Williams, Mrs. Ganser (9)

NAY: None (0)

POLICY

Mr. Williams made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Giles, that the Board of Education approves the following items listed under Policy:

Non-Resident
Student
our Request

Approve a request from the Lehigh County Office of Children & Youth to allow an elementary student, residing with an aunt outside the district, to continue attending classes in district for the remainder of the 2005-2006 school year.

Board Policy
2nd Reading

Approve revisions to school board policy #606 – Finances – Tax Collection, as amended after second reading.

YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green,
Mr. Ruth, Mr. Williams, Mrs. Ganser (9)

NAY: None (0)

**OLD
BUSINESS**

Mr. Dorshimer wanted to know if the district insurance covers the Ag Fair in light of the fact there will be animals on the premises. Chris Stafford will check to make sure.

Mr. Green made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Beers that the Board of Education approves to adhere to the old procedures for awarding State Championship athletic teams a piece of their uniform [until a new policy can be developed] since the district has been doing this for twenty some odd years. In light of the fact that the wrestling team took second in both the team competition and the individual competition, he recommends that varsity wrestling team members should be given their singlets only at the banquet on Thursday night at a cost not to exceed \$1500. If the cost goes above that he will pay for it himself, that's how strongly he feels about this motion.

ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Beers, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green (3)
NAY: Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler,
Mr. Ruth, Mr. Williams, Mrs. Ganser (6)

Motion defeated.

Mr. Ruth asked Attorney Stopp, district solicitor, what the term "collective bargaining agreement" meant as stated in the legal opinion his office rendered regarding the aide agreement. Was it used as a generic term or was he referring to the group as a "union". Attorney Stopp stated that it is a statement used for organized groups getting together for bargaining collectively.

FINANCIAL

Mrs. Giles made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Ruth, that the Board of Education approves the following financial items:

PC Abate-ments Approve abatements/exonerations of per capita taxes, as presented, for the residents that fall within the guidelines.

Cash Manage-ment Approve the Arthurs Lestrangle Cash Management Portfolio for the month of March 2006.

Portfolio YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green,
Mr. Ruth, Mr. Williams, Mrs. Ganser (9)
NAY: None (0)

**CORRESPON-
DENCE**

Invitations were received to the Ag Fair and the Green House Dedication as stated earlier.

Correspondence was received from a kindergarten parent which was dealt with earlier.

Mr. Dorshimer announced that PlanCon J was received and he will give it to Chris Stafford.

For the record, Mr. Ruth announced that he also contacted a person from the community regarding the fact that she heard the board was thinking of eliminating kindergarten.

**INFORM-
ATION**

Minutes of the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 21 Board of Directors meeting held on March 20, 2006.

Minutes of the Borough of Slatington Parks & Recreation Commission meetings held on March 20 and April 17, 2006.

Minutes of the Lehigh Career and Technical Institute Joint Operating Committee meeting held on March 22, 2006 and the LCTI Director's Report for April 2006.

Mrs. Ganser announced that the feasibility study will be presented at the Technology/Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting scheduled for May 3. The meeting will begin at 6:15 p.m. and will be held in the Slatington Elementary boardroom.

BUDGET

Christine Stafford, Business Manager distributed a list of non-mandated items that are in

DISCUSSION

the budget. She informed the board that school code prohibits the reduction of teachers due to financial reasons. That is a mandate the you cannot reduce your teaching staff just for financial reasons, there has to be decline in enrollment, a reduction in programs, etc. before you can consider cutting any teacher. She reviewed this list with the board.

She informed the board that this year, for the first time, the board is mandated to use the official budget document PDE 2028 as their public review document for their preliminary budget. She explained that she always included that document with our preliminary spreadsheets. The law does not prohibit us to do more than what the law requires.

She explained that as she began entering the information on the worksheets that were used for the Board Retreat for calculation of our index and our mills under the index, none of the numbers matched. It was a different worksheet. She called PDE and they informed her that they found errors in the original worksheet with the districts that are in Act 72. When they began checking their calculations they were not equalizing mills correctly. PDE pulled those worksheets and they are no longer available. The one that is in the budget document supposedly is correct. It looks as though the district will loose about \$10,000 in our equalized mills as a result of this. The new sheet realizes a 3.015 mill increase for Lehigh County and a 2.713 mill increase for Northampton County. That's just under the index, the 5.3% index. If you look at the end, just the index, just the 3.015 and 2.713 mills, it would amount to \$395,982.00 in cuts. The index plus the one exception, the PSERS that was talked about at the retreat, would mean that we would cut \$311,000 from the budget. Based on what PDE indicated was in committee was to change the special education exception to the 5.3 instead of the 10, in which case we would qualify for \$109,00.00 additional exceptions which would bring us to \$201,509.53.

If HB 39 passes, Chris Stafford reviewed a timeline that applies to school boards that did not participate in Act 72.

An updated budget cut list was distributed to board members. Chris reviewed this list with the board.

Dr. Sham offered a few explanations on the last few items on the updated budget cut list, because the board had asked the administration to show them a budget that brought the increase down to 2 mills. There are some things that are different from the last list. To get down to 2 mills you are talking about cutting a significant amount of money and from an educational standpoint he would not cut any of the items on the last page. He just wanted the board to understand that the clerical position in the central administration office is not on the list. However of the board still feels that it is necessary to cut that clerical position, item number fifteen on the list would be an alternative cut. If that position was eliminated, a rotating schedule would be developed for all secretaries in the district to assume the duties of the duplicating aide in order to get the job done and still keep the clerical position which is desperately needed.

Recess

Mrs. Ganser called for a recess for a courtesy break at 9:05 p.m. The board reconvened at 9:16 p.m.

Budget Discussion

Using the updated budget cut list, Chris Stafford continued to review & discuss the list with the board.

- 3.279 Mills Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Follweiler that the Board of Education approves a 3.279 mill preliminary budget increase, taking the cut list down through Item #14.
- Amend Motion 4.540 Mills Mr. Green made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Williams, that the Board of Education approves a 4.540 mill preliminary budget increase leaving everything on the cut list in back to Item #1.
- Budget Discussion (Con't.) Before voting, Mr. Williams offered a different way to look at the cut list. He indicated that there were several items on the cut list that he thought with very little discussion the board could agree that they are probably going to remove. Item #1 – reinstate the middle school guidance clerical position at a savings of \$46,904.00, Item #4 – tuition reimbursement for \$50,000, Item #7 – faculty lap top computers for \$67,464.00 and Item #9 – the new technology person for \$43,167 and what he would like to do for the preliminary budget is take out Item #9 and add \$25,000 back in for a part-time position. That would bring the total cuts to \$182,535.00. In addition to that take \$19,418.00 out of fund balance and be at the index.
- Public Comment Lori Geronikos – Washington Township -- Applauded Mr. Williams for his comments and his insight. She stated she was pleased with the fact that somebody gets it.
- Robert Cox – Washington Township – He echoed Mrs. Geroniko's statement. He also added that no one knows what is going to happen in Harrisburg tonight and it would really be a shame if the board made drastic cuts and realized that tomorrow they made a terrible mistake. You do not have to make your lowest cuts in a preliminary budget.
- Vote On Amendment ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Green, Mr. Williams (2)
NAY: Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Ruth, Mr. Beers, Mrs. Ganser (7)
Amendment defeated.
- Amend Motion 3.82 Blended Mills Mr. Williams made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Green, that the Board of Education only cuts items he previously listed, i.e., Item #1, #4, #7, and out of #9 cut \$18,167, leaving \$25,000 for that position for a total amount of \$182,535.00 in cuts. With that \$19,418.00 would come out of fund balance to pass a preliminary tax increase at \$201,953.00 or approximately 3.82 blended mills.
- Vote On Amendment ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Green, Mr. Williams, Mr. Beers, Mrs. Ganser (4)
NAY: Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Ruth, Mr. Dengler (5)
Amendment defeated.
- Amend Motion 3.747 Blended Mills Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Follweiler, to eliminate #1 – reinstate middle school clerical position, Item #4 – tuition reimbursement, Item #5 – summer custodial help, Item #7 – faculty lap top computers, Item #11 – ½ custodian retirement position, Item #13 – building budget per pupil allocation reduction, Item #9 – cut \$18,167.00 leaving \$25,000 for a new technology person reducing the preliminary budget to 3.747 blended mills.
- Public Comment Brian Geiger – Informed the board that cutting the ½ custodial retirement position is not something that he supports.
- Shawn Green – Expressed disappointment that the board could support cutting Item #13 which is a reduction in building per pupil allocations which affects all the children in the district and not look at cutting Item #12, the assistant football coach position which only affects a small amount of children in the district.
- Vote On ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Follweiler, Mr. Ruth, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Ganser (5)

Amendment NAY: Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green, Mr. Williams, Mr. Beers (4)
Amendment carried.

Adoption of Preliminary Budget for 2006-2007 Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dengler, that the Board of Education adopts the tentative general fund budget of the Northern Lehigh School District for the 2006-2007 school year in the amount of \$25,357,292.00. This is an increase of \$991,333.00 or 4.07% over last year's figures.

The preliminary budget is adopted with a 3.679 mill increase for Lehigh County and a 3.999 mill increase for Northampton County.

The millage rate for Lehigh County is 60.560 and the millage rate for Northampton County is 55.187.

- 1. Taxes under Act 511/Act 679 with no changes from 2005-2006:
 - a. A 1% Earned Income Tax shared equally with coterminous municipalities.
 - b. A Realty Transfer Tax shared equally with coterminous municipalities.
 - c. A \$10.00 Per Capita Tax (\$5.00 under Act 511 and \$5.00 under Section 679 of the School Code of 1949), taxable on residents age 18 and over.
 - d. A \$10.00 Emergency and Municipal Tax (formerly Occupation Privilege Tax) shared equally with coterminous municipalities.

Mrs. Giles requested permission to separate the adoption of the preliminary budget from the legal notices and vote on the budget separately. Mr. Dorshimer and Mr. Dengler were in agreement.

ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Follweiler, Mr. Ruth, Mr. Beers, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Ganser (6)
NAY: Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green, Mr. Williams (3)

Motion carried.

Legal Notice Tax Enumerators Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dengler, that the Board of Education approves the following legal notices:

Authorize the Secretary to publish a Legal Advertisement notifying every resident or inhabitant within the territorial limits of the school district of Northern Lehigh attaining eighteen (18) years of age, and every resident or inhabitant in said school district to notify the proper Per Capita Tax Enumerator within twelve (12) months of his or her becoming a resident or inhabitant, in accordance with the School Laws of Pennsylvania, Section 680, as amended June 16, 1972, Act 138. The assessors to contact are as follows:

BOROUGH OF WALNUTPORT

Kim Minjack – Borough Secretary
Walnutport Borough Building
417 Lincoln Avenue, Walnutport, PA 18088
610-767-1322

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

Diane Frantz – Township Secretary
Washington Township Municipal Building
PO Box 27, Slatedale, PA 18078
610-767-8108

BOROUGH OF SLATINGTON

John Kasten – Borough Secretary

125 South Walnut Street
Slatington, PA 18080
610-767-2131

Tax Levies Under Act 511 **RESOLVED** by the Board of School Directors of the School District of Northern Lehigh, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, under and by virtue of the Authority vested in it by the Local Tax Enabling Act of 1965 (Act 511) and its amendments, that a Per Capita Tax in the amount of Ten Dollars (\$10.00), (\$5.00 Act 511 and \$5.00 Act 679) as originally enacted by the Board of School Directors of Northern Lehigh School District on April 11, 1966, be and the same is again hereby levied, assessed, and imposed on each resident or inhabitant over eighteen (18) years of age in said District; a 1% Real Estate Transfer Tax, as originally enacted by the Board of School Directors of Northern Lehigh School District on April 11, 1966 and revised on April 12, 1987, be and the same is again levied, assessed, and imposed; an Emergency And Municipal Service Tax (formerly Occupation Privilege Tax) in the amount of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) on occupations as originally enacted by the Board of School Directors of Northern Lehigh School District on April 11, 1966, be and the same is again levied, assessed, and imposed; and an Earned Income Tax of 1%, as originally enacted by the Board of School Directors of Northern Lehigh School District on April 11, 1966, be and the same is again levied, assessed, and imposed for general school purposes for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2006. Please note that Real Estate Transfer Tax, Emergency and Municipal Service Tax, and Earned Income Tax are split equally with the municipality.

Per Capita Resolution **RESOLVED** by the Board of School Directors of the School District of Northern Lehigh, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, under and by virtue of the authority vested in it by Section 679 of the Pennsylvania School Code of 1949, and its amendments, that a Per Capita Tax to provide revenue for general school purposes be and the same is hereby levied, assessed and imposed in the amount of Five Dollars (\$5.00) on each resident or inhabitant over eighteen (18) years of age, in the territorial limits of the Northern Lehigh School District.

YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green, Mr. Ruth, Mr. Williams, Mrs. Ganser (9)
NAY: None (0)

**ADJOURN-
MENT**

Mr. Beers made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Follweiler, that the regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh School District Board of School Directors is adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green, Mr. Ruth, Mr. Williams, Mrs. Ganser (9)
NAY: None (0)

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan C. Dorshimer
Secretary

ATTEST: _____ President
Lauren A. Ganser