

NORTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Minutes

Slatington, PA

May 3, 2004

PURPOSE The regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors was called to order by the President, Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr., at 7:35 p.m. on Monday, May 3, 2004 in the senior high school auditorium.

ROLL CALL Members present: Mr. Franklin D. Beers, Mr. Robert J. Cox, Mr. Bryan C. Dorshimer, Mr. Raymond J. Follweiler, Jr., Mrs. Lauren A. Ganser, Mrs. Lori H. Geronikos, Mr. William H. Hazzard, Ms. Angelique M. Papay, Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr. (9)

Members absent: None (0)

Non-members present: Dr. Nicholas P. Sham, Sr., Mrs. Lynn B. Fedorcha, Mrs. Karen Nicholas, Mr. John Hrizuk, Mr. Robert Mack, Mr. Brian Geiger, Ms. Christine Stafford, Attorney Dimitri Tsarouhis (Solicitor), Mr. Jeffrey Bachman, Ms. Laurie Newman, Ms. Ashley Kunkle, Mrs. Doneta Merkle

VISITORS Approximately 150 visitors attended the meeting, in addition to Terry Ahner, reporter for The Chronicle newspaper and Sharon Minnich, reporter for The Times News.

PUBLIC COMMENT Mr. Green informed the public that anyone wishing to address the board on any agenda items should approach the podium, state their name and address, and whether they are representing an organization.

ON AGENDA Each individual will be allowed five minutes to address the board.

SPECIAL BOARD REPORTS Lehigh Career and Technical Institute -- Mrs. Lori H. Geronikos
Deferred her report to Mr. Randy Hensinger who was attending the meeting representing LCTI to discuss their budget.

Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit -- Mr. Bryan C. Dorshimer
Mr. Dorshimer asked that all board members complete the ballot they received for election of CLIU board members.

Committee Reports and/or Meetings
All board members received a copy of the minutes of the Technology/Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting held on April 7, 2004, the minutes of the Policy/Education/Staffing Committee meeting held on April 27, 2004, and the minutes of the Community Relations Committee meeting held on March 17, 2004.

Student Representatives To The Board Report -- Ms. Ashley Kunkle distributed her report for the month and reported on its contents.

Legislative Report -- Mrs. Lori H. Geronikos
Mrs. Geronikos reported on several meetings she attended with legislators during the past month.

Federal and Other Programs Update -- Mrs. Lynne B. Fedorcha
Mrs. Newman reported on a grant that the district just received. Mrs. Fedorcha also reported on the kinds of grants that the district has obtained in the past.

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

1. Dr. Sham introduced Mr. Randy Hensinger, Business Manager at Lehigh Career and Technical Institute who gave a budget presentation to the board.
2. He introduced Mrs. Lynn Sechler who gave a update of the Northern Lehigh Educational Foundation's Capital Campaign.
3. He read some correspondence from Northern Lehigh Connections regarding an Early Intervention Program and a Head Start Program.

4. He gave an update on parent question & answer sessions held with elementary parents regarding reconfiguration.

An Executive Session was held at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Faculty Room for personnel and legal issues.

PERSONNEL Mr. Cox made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Geronikos, that the Board of Education approves the following personnel items:

Appointment Non-Instructional James Fenstermaker**
 Assignment*: One-on-One Special Education Aide in the senior high school, replacing Jacqueline Ehrich (Lebrun), who resigned.
 Salary: \$8.90 Per Hour/6 ½ Hours Per Day/5 Days Per Week
 Effective Date: May 4, 2004
 **60-Day Probationary Period ** (Pending Verification of Clearances)

Unpaid Leave James Bauer Approve the request of James Bauer to take a two-day leave, without pay, on June 23 and 24, 2004. These days will be used in conjunction with his two personal days. His request will not be considered a precedent for future requests per correspondence received from the Northern Lehigh Education Association.

Resignations Jim Tkach – Asst. Athletic Director Accept the resignation of Jim Tkach, from his position as Assistant Athletic Director, at the conclusion of the 2003-2004 school year.

Milton Phillips Accept the resignation of Milton Phillips from his position as middle school custodian. Effective August 18, 2004, Mr. Phillips will retire after 15 years of service to the Northern Lehigh School District.

Substitutes Non-Instructional Approve the following substitute instructional aides for the 2003-2004 school year at the substitute rate of \$7.25 per hour:

Tristin Tkach – Instructional Aide
 Kristen Lapatchak – Instructional Aide (**Pending Verification of Clearances**)

Co-Curricular Appointments for 2004-2005

Head Football Coach – Jim Tkach – \$6350.78
 Assistant Football Coach – Samuel Bonner -- \$4127.39
 Assistant Football Coach – Steve Hluschak -- \$4127.39
 Assistant Football Coach – Glenn Serfass -- \$4127.39
 Assistant Football Coach – Joe Tout -- \$4127.39
 Assistant Football Coach – Ryan VanNorman -- \$4127.39
 Assistant Football Coach — Chad Henritzky – One Half of \$4127.39
 Assistant Football Coach – Richard Kulp – One Half of \$4127.39
 Head Cross Country Coach – David Oertner -- \$3804.90
 Assistant Cross Country Coach – Beth Case -- \$2472.72
 Head Field Hockey Coach – Jessica Schoenberger -- \$3804.90
 Assistant Field Hockey Coach – Tiffany Zastko -- \$2472.72
 Head Boys Soccer Coach – Timothy Nickisher -- \$4590.45
 Assistant Boys Soccer Coach – Doug Keichel -- \$2550.25
 Majorette/Band Front Director – Lauren Zielinski -- \$1909.15
 Senior High Fall Intramurals – Renee Evans – Tennis -- \$743.88
 Senior High Fall Intramurals – Todd Herzog – Weightlifting/Indoor Floor Tennis -- \$743.88
 Senior High Fall Intramurals – David Redline – Basketball -- \$743.88

PERSONNEL

(Con't.)

Unpaid Volunteer Coaches Approve to appoint the following individuals as unpaid volunteer football coaches for the 2004-2005 football season:

- Manuel Guedes
- Dennis Rose

Substitutes Instructional Approve the following substitute teacher for the 2003-2004 school year at the substitute teacher rates of \$70.00 for 1-10 non-consecutive days; \$80.00 for 11-20 non-consecutive days; and \$90.00 for 21+ non-consecutive days:

Heather M. Kuntz – Elementary Education

Extend Clerical TVR clerk/receptionist Approve to extend the May 7, 2004 termination date of Heather Tift, temporary vacancy replacement in the district office, for an indeterminate amount of time, pending the anticipated retirement of Judith Mack.

- YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazzard, Ms. Papay, Mr. Green (9)
- NAY: None (0)

POLICY

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

Board Policy 1st Reading Approve revisions to existing school board policy#217 – Pupils – Graduation Requirements, as presented, after first reading.

Homebound Instruction Grant homebound instruction for a 9th grade student, Student No. 07-35500, for five hours per week, effective April 30, 2004 and terminating on or about May 14, 2004.

Field Trip Requests Approve Peters Elementary 6th Grade students to take a class field trip to the Capitol Building/State Museum of PA in Harrisburg, PA on May 27, 2004. They will be leaving Peters Elementary at 8:00 a.m. and will return at 5:00 p.m. Cost of this trip will be paid for by the PTO.

Approve to authorize the senior class to conduct their Senior Class Trip to Hershey Park on June 4, 2004. There will be no cost to the district for this trip. The Class of 2004 will pay for the cost for transportation.

- YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazzard, Ms. Papay, Mr. Green (9)
- NAY: None (0)

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Cox, that the Board of Education approves the following teacher as a helping teacher in the Northern Lehigh School District Induction Program from April 1, 2004 through April 1, 2005:

| <u>Helping Teacher</u> | <u>Inductee</u> | <u>Stipend</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Gail Lafferty | Tracy Hoffman | \$750.00 |

- YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazzard, Ms. Papay, Mr. Green (9)
- NAY: None (0)

NEW
BUSINESS
 Parks And
 Recreation
 Committee
 Appointment

Mrs. Ganser informed the board that there is a need to appoint a person to the Borough of Slatington's Parks and Recreation Committee. This person does not necessarily have to be a board member, but they must reside in the borough. She stated that Mr. Kasten, Borough Manager indicated that Jodi Nestor, a borough resident, has been attending the meetings and has expressed an interest in the appointment. The person appointed to the committee from the board is not a resident of the borough. Mrs. Ganser made a motion to appoint Jodi Nestor to represent the board on the Parks and Recreation Committee for the Borough of Slatington. Mr. Beers, a resident of the borough, had expressed an interest in possibly serving on the committee. It was also the recommendation of the board to have Jodi Nestor attend the next meeting for the board to meet her.

Motion died for lack of a second.

Mrs. Ganser stated that there was an announcement for another grant opportunity, which is being provided by the Northern Lehigh Future Focus Health & Communities Services Task Force in partnership with MESH. Mini grants will be available to help prevent alcohol and other drug abuse in the Northern Lehigh Area.

FINANCIAL

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

- PC Abatements Approve abatement and exonerations of per capita taxes, as presented, for the residents that fall within the guidelines.
- Construction Account Bills Approve payment of bills from the Construction Account, as presented.
- Extended Construction Bills Approve payment of bills from the Extended Construction Account, as presented.
- Cash Mgmt. Portfolio Approve the Arthurs Lestrange Cash Management Portfolio for the month of March 2004, as presented
- NLMS Student Activities Account Approve the Northern Lehigh Middle School Student Activities Fund Statement for the month of March 2004.
- Refund Of Real Estate Taxes Approve the following real estate refund due to assessment reduction from \$52,950 to \$11,850 effective April 1, 2003.
1. Northern Lehigh Playground Association in the amount of \$469.46 for the period April 1, 2003 through June 30, 2003 (2002-03 tax year).
 2. Northern Lehigh Playground Association in the amount of \$1,925.69 for the period July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004 (2003-04 tax year).
- Change Order SE Elevator Project Approve the Change Order for the re-caulking of the control joints at Slatington Elementary School by McKelvey Construction Company. This is to be completed in conjunction with the elevator project.
- Renew Contract With Communications Approve a one-year renewal to our local and long-distance phone contract with XO Communications. The basic rate for telephone service will drop from \$12.44 per line per month to \$9.94 per line per XO month, which will give us a savings of approximately \$130.00 per month. We will receive an additional E-Rate discount of 47% on top of this provided the Federal Government continues the E-Rate program.

FINANCIAL

(Con't.)

Upgrades To Automatic Fire Protection System Accept the proposal from Kistler O'Brien for upgrades to the automatic fire protection system in the four district cafeteria buildings. These upgrades are recommended by our insurance carrier to comply with current fire insurance regulations. All expenses would be borne by the cafeteria fund. Prices would be as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Peters & Slatington Elementary | \$2,550 less 10% discount = \$2,295 |
| Middle School | \$1,770 less 10% discount = \$1,593 |
| High School | \$1,430 less 10% discount = \$1,287 |
| Total | <u>\$5,175</u> |

LCTI Budget Distribution The 2004-2005 Lehigh Career & Technical Institute School budget was distributed to all board members.

INFORMATION

All board members received a copy of the minutes of the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit Board of Directors meeting held on March 15, 2004, the minutes of Washington Township Board of Supervisors meeting held on March 2, 2004 and the minutes of the Lehigh Career & Technical Institute JOC meeting held on March 24, 2004.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Steven Bandzi – Washington Township – asked when the district renovates and secures a bond issue, when does that get figured into the budget? Stated that he secured names on a petition in the hope that the board will consider some budget cutting. He asked why flyers that were placed on cars by members of the taxpayers association were removed from the windshields. Dr. Sham informed Mr. Bandzi that there is a district policy, Policy 913, which addresses distribution/posting of information for special interest groups.

Greg Williams – Slatington – In looking at the decision to do a one-year interim financing he had a question about the interest rates.

David Edwards – Washington Township – presented the board with a petition signed by 150 residents to stop the field house project. He also questioned the legality of the contracts that are signed for the district. Dr. Sham shared a legal opinion received from the district's solicitor regarding the enforceability of the field house renovations contracts.

David Schnaars – Slatington – Addressed the manner in which the board members voted to approve items on the agenda. Was concerned with the fact that the board has not shared the budget information with the public to date so that they would know what they are talking about.

Sheryl Giles – Washington Township – Wanted to know what the difference is between the Northern Lehigh Educational Foundation and the Northern Lehigh League of Taxpayers. Both organizations are non-profit and have 501 (c) (3) status and are exempt from federal income tax. She indicated that in the Taxpayers Association would like to raise money to give to the school district. Questioned why the foundation is allowed to distribute flyers in our schools and the taxpayer's organization cannot do the same. Mr. Green informed Mrs. Giles that the taxpayers association should follow the guidelines listed in school board policy #913. This is what the educational foundation does.

Courtesy Break

President Green called for courtesy break at 9:25 p.m. The board reconvened at 9:35 p.m.

**BUDGET
DISCUSSION**

President Green began the budget discussion by reviewing what a school district budget is comprised of and our district in particular.

Business Manager, Christine Stafford, reviewed the latest draft of budget cuts.

Dr. Sham indicated he received several letters from residents of the district requesting that the board not make some of the cuts that have been suggested, essentially, if it gets down to hurting students, they asked that the board not make those cuts. Copies of these letters will be given to all board members. He cautioned board members once they get to page 3 of the suggested budget cuts there will be severe impacts on the district. He placed the budget cuts on an overhead projector and reviewed them for the board and visitors attending the meeting.

**BOARD
DISCUSSION**

Mr. Cox addressed the fact that the board received a lot of information at the meeting. The members of the public have not had an opportunity to see the information as well. He didn't know where to draw the line, without sitting down and reviewing the information. Whatever the board does this evening, whatever is voted on, is not going to be the millage rate that everyone will pay for the next year. Voting on the preliminary budget this evening makes the document official and allows the public will be able to obtain a copy to review. Once this budget is adopted, it cannot go higher, it can only go lower.

7.902436 Mill Mr. Cox made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Geronikos, that the Board of Education Preliminary approves to adopt the tentative general fund budget of the Northern Lehigh School District for the 2004-2005 school year as presented, with a 7.902439 mills increase.

Budget

Angelique Papay – Wondered where Mr. Cox got the millage rate from.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

Richard Vreeland – Washington Township – Suggested that teachers pay their health and welfare benefits to help save money. He indicated that if the taxpayers got together and not pay their taxes and put them in an equity for three years, the board would come up with a tax reduction.

Steven Bandzi – Washington Township – Outside of the items that are directly related to the students, he feels that the board could remove all the other items, like staff or administration that is not needed.

David Edwards – Washington Township – Anything that is cut from the budget affects the children. Has anyone been asked to take a cut in pay instead of loosing their jobs?

Diane Schnaars – Slatinton – Concerned about unfunded state and federal mandates. What are other school districts doing? What are the penalties if we don't follow the mandates?

Holly Haberern – Washington Township – Student – A zero mill tax increase would be ideal, but that isn't realistic. She addressed the recommendation of not replacing teachers and the problems with class size that would result in this action.

David Schnaars – Slatinton – Had a question with regard to the process that would be used to approve the budget and when would the public be able to review the budget.

Sheryl Giles – Washington Township – Agrees that nothing should be cut that affects the children. Addressed the fact that educational field trips are on the cut list, but she understands that speaking to high school children in the district that they haven't been going on field trips. She questioned what other items are on the cut list that she felt the students are not getting. What other cuts could be made are not being listed?

Carol Evans – Washington Township – Several weeks ago she asked the board to go back and think very hard and come back with constructive input with regard to the budget. That has been done, however, she feels that it is somewhat laced with sentiment and scare tactics. If you have to go to a 0 mill increase then that is what you need to do, but you have to do it in a way that you eliminate administration because you are in the business of educating children. Start looking at being more responsive instead of combative to the residents of the district and put the children first.

Dan – High School Student – We don't need new computers, we don't need video conferencing, but we should keep the co-curricular activities. The only real solution is to compromise on the cuts and the tax increase.

Linda Ratz – Slatington – Commented on the fact that the board was considering not replacing the math teacher in the high school. She feels that this is not a good idea.

Lynn Sechler – Washington Township – Wanted to follow up on the AP courses. If you don't replace the math and social studies teacher, you will have larger class sizes and you won't have the extra teachers to teach the honors classes and the AP courses.

Kevin Gledhill – Slatington – High School Student – Cutting honors and AP classes will have a negative effect on our students and will hinder them getting into college.

Andrea Eberhardt – High School Student – Has anyone looked at having participants pay for their own sports physicals. She pays for her own band instruments and she also purchased items to participate in the school musical.

Veronica Provenzano – Washington Township – Asked that the board put the children of the district first. The children in our district love their schools and the teachers in our district are dedicated and deserve our admiration. She asked that the school board take a more active part in trying to keep what we have and keep the programs we have. We should be proactive in getting things, be more creative.

David Edwards – Washington Township – Asked what the board is going to do about the petition he presented to them at the beginning of the meeting.

Board Comment Mr. Cox reiterated that what the board needs to do is to adopt a preliminary budget. The millage rate that is passed this evening has no bearing whatsoever on the final millage rate in June. Once the board adopts a preliminary budget it cannot be increased, only decreased. He feels the board should get the budget out into the community as it is and work from there to adopt a final budget.

Vote On 7.902436 Mill Increase
 ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Cox, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazzard, Mr. Green (4)
 NAY: Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Beers, Mr. Follweiler,
 Mrs. Ganser, Ms. Papay (5)
 Motion defeated.

ADOPTION OF TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR 2004-2005 Mrs. Ganser made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Follweiler, that the Board of Education adopt a tentative general fund budget increase for the Northern Lehigh School District for the 2004-2005 school year in the amount of \$22,500,563.00. This is an increase of \$1,229,372.00 or 5.73% over last year's figures. The tentative budget is adopted with a 6.98 mill increase for Lehigh County and a 6.79 mill increase for Northampton County. This needs to be adjusted for the common difference and it is one of those formulas that needs to be worked backwards.

6.9 Mill Increase
 1. Taxes under Act 511 with no changes from 2003-2004:
 a. A 1% Earned Income Tax shared equally with coterminous municipalities.
 b. A 1% Realty Transfer Tax shared equally with the 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 Occupational Privilege Tax.

ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazzard,

Mr. Papay, Mr. Green (6)
NAY: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Beers (3)
Motion carried.

ADJOURN-
MENT

Mr. Beers made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Ganser, that the regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors be adjourned at 11:40 p.m.

YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos,
Mr. Hazzard, Ms. Papay, Mr. Green (9)
NAY: None (0)

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan C. Dorshimer
Secretary

ATTEST: _____ President
Mathias J. Green, Jr.