

NORTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regular Meeting
Board Minutes

Slatington, PA
February 11, 2015

PURPOSE

The regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors was called to order by the President, Mr. Edward E. Hartman, at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 11, 2015, in the Administration Office Board Room.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Mr. Robin T. Distler, Mr. Gary S. Fedorcha, Mr. Raymond J. Follweiler, Jr., Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr., Mr. Robert J. Keegan, Jr., Mrs. Donna M. Kulp, Mr. Gregory S. Williams and Mr. Edward E. Hartman (8)

Members absent: Mrs. Natalie J. Green, (1)

Non-members present: Mr. Jeffrey Bachman, Mrs. Susan Bahnick, Ms. Emily Bevans (Sr. Rep.), Mr. Greg Derr, Mrs. Michele Dotta, Mr. John Hrizuk, Mr. Gavin Kemery (Jr. Rep.), Mr. Paul Leonzi, Mrs. Sherri Molitoris, Mrs. Karen Nicholas, Mr. Scott Pyne, Mrs. Tanya Simms, Attorney Charles Stopp (Solicitor), and Mr. Robert Vlasaty.

VISITORS

Approximately thirteen visitors attended the meeting, in addition to Terry Ahner, reporter for The Times News and Channel 13 News.

APPROVE MINUTES

Mr. Follweiler made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Fedorcha that the minutes of the regular school board meeting held on January 12, 2015 be approved and ordered filed.

YEA: Mr. Distler, Mr. Fedorcha, Mr. Follweiler, Mr. Green, Mr. Keegan, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mr. Hartman (8)

NAY: None (0)

SPECIAL BOARD REPORTS

Lehigh Career and Technical Institute - Mr. Fedorcha reported that at the board seats is the 2015-2016 budget for LCTI. The budget will be on next month's agenda for approval. Mr. Fedorcha reported that Mrs. Elsie Bell, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, will be retiring effective August, 2015. Mr. Fedorcha announced the names of the second and third place SkillsUSA winners from Northern Lehigh and expressed how proud he was of all of them.

Legislative Report – Mr. Gregory Williams reported that today Governor Wolf announced his proposal for adding a 5% natural gas tax for drilling and indicated that most of that money would be earmarked for education.

Lehigh Carbon Community College - Mr. Green stated that last week they had their first electronic board meeting at the college. The LCCC budget is on the agenda tonight for approval which reflects a 0% increase and Northern Lehigh's share decreased by approximately \$7,000. Mr. Green added that so far all of the districts have approved the budget. Mrs. Kulp stated that she heard Parkland did not pass it. Mr. Green responded that they passed the budget, but they did not vote in favor of the resolution allowing LCCC to acquire real estate; however, ten of the thirteen districts did approve it, so it has been adopted.

Committee Reports and/or Meetings

Minutes of the Technology/Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting held on February 4, 2015 were distributed.

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on February 4, 2015 were distributed.

Student Representatives to the Board Report – Ms. Emily Bevans and Mr. Gavin Kemery distributed their written student representative report and verbally reported on its contents.

Solicitor's Report – Attorney Stopp distributed to the business managers new guidelines stemming from a recent court case regarding a taxing bodies' ability to file tax appeals.

Attorney Stopp reported that in the past, delinquent real estate tax collection was done at the county level. Lehigh County has decided to have a private vendor collect delinquent taxes. Attorney Stopp forwarded literature on that vendor to the business managers.

**SPECIAL
BOARD
REPORTS
(cont.)**

Federal and Other Programs Update – Mrs. Karen A. Nicholas announced that free computer classes for senior citizens (over age of 55) are being offered at Slatington Elementary School on Tuesday, February 17; Thursday, February 19; Tuesday, February 24; and Thursday, February 26 from 1:30 – 3:30PM. Anybody interested in attending should contact John Hrizuk.

Mrs. Nicholas reported that once again this year, a group of eighth grade students is participating in the What's So Cool about Manufacturing video contest. This year the students visited Amcor Rigid Plastics in Allentown. Amcor creates plastic bottles for many beverages and other products. There will be online voting for the best video of the competition and an awards ceremony on February 24, 2015 at ArtsQuest. Mrs. Nicholas added that this is an excellent opportunity for our students to learn about the manufacturing process and the career possibilities that are available here in our area.

Business Manager's Report – Mrs. Molitoris introduced Ms. Audrey Bear, from Robert W. Baird & Co. who briefly described the handouts outlining the bonds and the savings that can be realized in refinancing at a better interest rate. Ms. Bear explained that the 2010 and most of the 2011 bonds could be refinanced now. Mrs. Kulp questioned whether the business office has a preference on how the savings are distributed. Mrs. Molitoris stated that would depend on the board's direction for next year's budget. Mr. Williams stated that as a board they will make that decision, but he feels it would make sense to average it out. Mr. Green asked about the fees associated with refinancing. Ms. Bear explained that the numbers represented are after paying all of the costs. Mr. Green asked for a copy of those fees. Mr. Fedorcha asked when the board would need to make a decision. Ms. Bear stated that our solicitor, bond counsel and she need to make a formal resolution. Also, there has to be legal advertisement before and after the resolution approval which could be completed as early as next month's board meeting. Mr. Green questioned the 2012 bonds which, at the earliest, can be refinanced in 2018. Mr. Green asked Ms. Bear to inform the board how much the approximate costs would be if we waited until 2018 and refinanced the 2012 bonds as well. Ms. Bear said she can give the costs as of today; however, we would have to factor in inflation for the costs moving forward. Mr. Green stated that while saving \$150,000 looks good on paper now, his concern is that the fees outweigh the savings and waiting until 2018 to refinance the 2012 bonds also may allow us to recognize an even greater savings. Ms. Bear stated that while that is an option, the risk is the interest rate may be higher. Ms. Bear pointed out that the 2012 bonds were refinanced at a 2.00-2.25% rate which is very low. Mrs. Molitoris added that as of this year, there will be items added to our financial report (i.e. compensated absences) that we are being told should not affect our bond rating; however, it is uncertain at this time. Ms. Bear added that the last three audits and your current budget play a big role in your rating. The board asked Ms. Bear to prepare a spreadsheet on the cost breakdown and the cost savings for the 2010, 2011 refinanced bonds spread throughout the term for the March Finance Committee Meeting. The board asked that Ms. Bear proceed with the legal advertisement and after the Finance meeting it will be decided if the board will move forward on a vote at the March board meeting.

Mrs. Molitoris stated that she is looking for direction from the board on the 2015-2016 budget. Mrs. Molitoris added that we can currently raise taxes 2.6% which translates to 0.5398 cents per \$1,000 of assessment. Mrs. Molitoris asked that the board keep in mind that close to \$700,000.00 worth of upgrades need to be done on the roof and failing equipment at Peters Elementary which will be paid with long range maintenance fund balance. Also, PSERS will be increasing at least \$545,000.00. Mrs. Kulp questioned if the PSERS rates would be declining after next year's big increase. Mrs. Molitoris responded that she is not aware of any decrease. Mrs. Kulp questioned whether we have money set aside for the PSERS increases. Mrs. Molitoris responded that we have a little over \$3 million set aside for PSERS increases. She added that we do a good job at putting in spending freezes so that we are able to put money back into our fund balance; however, there will come a time when that will not be possible. Mrs. Molitoris added that the district previously received \$350,000 from PlanCON, and over \$200,000 in back taxes from the former Slatington Lamp Factory. Mr. Williams stated that he is in favor of preparing the budget at the 2.6% index so as not to dip into fund balance to support the budget. Mrs. Kulp stated that she is not in favor of 2.6% but rather 1% or 1.5%. Mr. Williams added that it is easier to start at 2.6% and move down from that. Mr. Fedorcha agreed with Mr. Williams that 2.6% is a good starting point for budget planning and hopefully we can bring it down from there. Mr. Green added that he does not want to raise taxes period, but rather he would like to create a budget based on what we need to keep the district moving forward and to give our students the best possible education. Mrs. Kulp made it clear that she does not want the board to start a line by line budget. Mr. Williams asked that budgets be prepared at 2.6%, 1.9% and 0%.

**SPECIAL
BOARD
REPORTS
(cont.)**

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Hartman stated that Mr. Michaels was absent from the meeting due to a death in the family.

Mrs. Nicholas announced that last week was National School Counselors week. The school counselors district-wide are hard-working and do a great job with our students.

Mr. Hartman reported that an executive session was held prior to tonight's meeting to discuss personnel issues.

PERSONNEL

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

Uncompensated Leave Of Absence

Approve a continuation of an uncompensated leave of absence for employee #260 beginning January 19, 2015 until the end of the 2014-2015 school term. Employee plans to return to her current position upon release from her attending physician.

YEA: None (0)

NAY: Mr. Distler, Mr. Fedorcha, Mr. Follweiler, Mr. Green, Mr. Keegan, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mr. Hartman (8)

Motion defeated.

**PERSONNEL
(cont.)**

Mr. Follweiler made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Fedorcha, that the Board of Education approves the following personnel items:

Appointment Non-Instructional

Kerry Hill*

Assignment: Slatington Elementary Office Aide replacing Diana Beltran who resigned.
Salary: \$10.40 Per Hour/4.5 Hours Per Day/5 Days Per Week up to 180 student days as needed according to language in MOU
Effective: February 12, 2015
*60 Day probationary period ending April 12, 2015

Ann Marie Belo*

Assignment: Middle School Cook's Helper replacing Melanie Mohr.
Salary: \$9.00 Per Hour/2.5 Hours Per Day/5 Days Per Week up to 180 Student Days per year plus additional cleaning days as needed (2013-2017 Educational Support Personnel CBA)
Effective: February 10, 2015
*60 Day probationary period ending April 10, 2015

Change of Status

Angela Henninger

From: Part Time Slatington Elementary School Cook's Helper
To: Full Time Slatington Elementary School Cook's Helper
Salary: No change in salary
Effective: January 20, 2015

Family Medical Leave

Approve the request of employee #3360 to take a Family Medical Leave beginning on or about March 9, 2015, for the birth of her third child. Employee is requesting to use accumulated sick and personal days. Upon exhaustion of sick days and personal days, she is requesting a family medical leave until the end of the 2014-2015 school year. Employee plans to return to her current teaching position at the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year.

Approve the request of employee #5220 to take a Family Medical Leave beginning March 12, 2015, for her own medical reasons. Employee is requesting to use accumulated sick days in conjunction with her leave. Employee plans to return to her current position upon release of her attending physician.

Approve the request of employee #6849 to take a two week Family Medical Leave beginning on or about January 27, 2015, for the birth of a child. Employee is requesting to use ten (10) sick days in conjunction with the family medical leave.

PERSONNEL**(cont.)**

Salary Adjustments Acknowledge the following teachers who have completed the requirements per the Collective Bargaining Agreement that would entitle them to a salary increase for the second half of the 2014-2015 school year:

Derek Long

From: Step 7B
To: Step 7B+24

Kara Richardson

From: Step 5B
To: Step 5B+24

Substitute-Instructional Approve the following substitute teachers for the 2014-2015 school year at the 2014-2015 substitute teacher rates as approved on the Supplementary Personnel Salary Schedule:

Angel Gerould – Elementary, Mid-Level English, Reading Specialist and Family Consumer Sciences

Co-Curricular Volunteers 2014-2015 Arielle Dentith Assistant Softball Coach
Sherilyn Jones* Musical Choreographer
* Pending Verification of Missing Personnel File Items

YEA: Mr. Distler, Mr. Fedorcha, Mr. Follweiler, Mr. Green, Mr. Keegan, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mr. Hartman (8)

NAY: None (0)

**CURRIC-
ULUM AND
INSTRUC-
TION**

Mr. Williams made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Green, that the Board of Education approves the following curriculum and instruction items:

Official Local School District Holidays Approve the resolution to identify Official Local School District Holidays (OLSDH) in accordance with PA School Code Section 1502.

2015-2016 School Calendar Approve the 2015-2016 Northern Lehigh School District Calendar as presented.

YEA: Mr. Distler, Mr. Fedorcha, Mr. Follweiler, Mr. Green, Mr. Keegan, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mr. Hartman (8)

NAY: None (0)

FINANCIAL

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

Financial Reports

General Fund Account month of December
NLMS Student Activities Account month of December
NLHS Student Activities and Scholarship Account month of December

List of Bills

Approve the Following List of Bills:
General Fund months of January and February
Refreshment Stand month of January
Cafeteria Fund month of January

Lehigh Carbon Community College 2015-2016 Approve a resolution regarding the 2015-2016 Lehigh Carbon Community College Sponsor contribution Budget. Total expenditures equal \$6,186,337.00 which represents no change over the 2014-2015 budget. Northern Lehigh's share of the total budget is \$216,979.00, a decrease of \$7,256.00 or (3.2%). A copy of the budget was distributed at the January 12, 2015 school board meeting.

- Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit 2015-2016 Budget Approve a resolution regarding the 2015-2016 Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit Operational and Program Services budget. Total expenditures equal \$3,068,411.00 an increase of \$129,675.00 (4.4%) over the 2014-2015 budget. Northern Lehigh's share is proposed to be \$20,298.00 an increase of \$332.00 from the 2014-2015 budget. A copy of the budget was distributed at the January 12, 2015 school board meeting.
- Single Audit 2013-2014 Accept the 2013-2014 audit and management report for the single audit ending June 30, 2014. A copy of the audit was distributed at the January 12, 2015 school board meeting.
- Snyder Hoffman & Assoc. Authorize Administration to enter into a contract with Snyder Hoffman and Associates to design, engineer and assist with the bidding of the cooling tower replacement and boiler replacement at Peters Elementary with a not to exceed amount of \$19,550 to be paid from the Capital Projects Account.
- Tremco Roofing Authorize Administration to enter into a contract with Tremco Roofing to install a new Alphaguard roofing system with a 20 year warranty on the west wing of Peters Elementary. The project is through state bid and estimated to cost between \$220,000.00 and \$235,000.00 to be paid from the long range maintenance fund balance in the 2015-2016 school year
- YEA: Mr. Distler, Mr. Fedorcha, Mr. Follweiler, Mr. Green, Mr. Keegan, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mr. Hartman (8)
NAY: None (0)

INFORMATION

Minutes of the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21 Board of Directors meeting held on December 15, 2014 were distributed.

Minutes of the Lehigh Carbon Community College Board of Trustees meeting held on December 4, 2014 were distributed.

Minutes of the Lehigh Career & Technical Institute Joint Operating Committee meeting held on December 10, 2014 were distributed.

Mr. Fedorcha thanked Mrs. Susan Bahnick for meeting with Congressman Charlie Dent on Monday to discuss the school lunch regulations placed on school districts. Mr. Fedorcha added that she did a great job getting the message out and we need to follow up with him and hold his feet to the fire. Mrs. Bahnick stated that she had a very productive meeting with Congressman Dent and explained to him the obstacles they are facing with the restrictions and budgetary guidelines and also the waste associated with these restrictions. Congressman Dent was very supportive and agreed that there needs to be compromise.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Fedorcha 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 8:33 p.m.

YEA: Mr. Distler, Mr. Fedorcha, Mr. Follweiler, Mr. Green, Mr. Keegan, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mr. Hartman (8)
NAY: None (0)

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Williams
Secretary

ATTEST: _____ President
Edward E. Hartman