

NORTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regular Meeting
Board Minutes

Slatington, PA
September 10, 2007

PURPOSE

The regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors was called to order by the President, Mr. Peter A. Ruth, at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, September 10, 2007 in the Slatington Elementary School gymnasium.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Mr. Donald H. Dengler, Mr. Bryan C. Dorshimer, Mr. Raymond J. Follweiler, Jr., Mrs. Lauren A. Ganser (7:40), Mrs. Sheryl A. Giles, Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr. (7:35), Mrs. Donna M. Kulp, Mr. Gregory S. Williams, Mr. Peter A. Ruth (8)

Members absent: None (0)

Non-members present: Mr. Donald Allen, Mrs. Lisa Blank, Mrs. Jill Chamberlain, Mr. Greg Derr, Mrs. Lynne B. Fedorcha, Mr. John Hrizuk, Dr. Linda Marcincin, Mrs. Laurie Newman-Mankos, Mrs. Karen Nicholas, Mr. David Papay, Ms. Rachel Parisi (Student Rep.) Ms. Maria Pinnata, Mrs. Diane Ruff, Dr. Nicholas P. Sham, Sr., Mr. Michael Showak (Student Rep), Mrs. Dawn Wadsworth, Mrs. Aileen Yadush and Mrs. Sherri Molitoris.

VISITORS

Approximately forty-nine visitors attended the meeting in addition to Terry Ahner reporter for The Times News and Kirk Jackson from The Morning Call.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Robert Cox – Washington Township would like to speak on the renovations to Slatington Elementary.

April Krempasky – Washington Township would like to speak on the renovations to Slatington Elementary.

Steve Eitner – Washington Township would like to speak on the renovations to Slatington Elementary.

Kristie Wilk – Washington Township would like to speak on the renovations to Slatington Elementary.

Diane Schnaars – Slatington Borough would like to speak on the renovations to Slatington Elementary.

SPECIAL BOARD REPORTS

Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit - Mr. Bryan C. Dorshimer reported that they have finalized the sale of the former CLIU building with LCCC. The CLIU Board Briefs were distributed and he verbally reported on its contents which included a summer digital video camp that was offered, election of officers, approval of the professional education plan and grants received.

Legislative Report – Mr. Gregory S. Williams reported on that the House Finance Committee is currently holding hearings on HB1600. This bill proposes to raise sales tax state wide by ½ percent and also to impose a .22% income tax state wide. Then PDE will calculate a state allocation and then give that to each school district for further property tax reduction.

Committee Reports and/or Meetings

Minutes of the Technology Building and Grounds Meeting held on September 5, 2007 were distributed.

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on September 5, 2007 were distributed.

Student Representatives to the Board Report

Ms. Rachael Parisi and Mr. Michael Showak distributed their written student representative report and verbally reported on its contents.

Federal and Other Programs Update - Mrs. Lynne B. Fedorcha distributed her written report and verbally reported on its contents which included 2007-2008 grant allocations and goals, AYP report, two big planning projects for this year which include high school planning for Middle States Accreditation and the development of the 2008-2014 Strategic Plan, third year of Rtl, third year for Reading Apprenticeship Framework for grades 5-12 and Jill Chamberlain

instructional
are **SPECIAL**
BOARD
REPORTS
(cont.)

has been trained as a district trainer, emphasizing technology integration into our framework, OnHandsSchool and PowerGrade. She also stated that board members invited to attend the Safe School and Professional Development Committee Meetings which meet on the second Tuesday of the month in the board room.

Mrs. Kulp asked if we have applied for the High Schools Of The Future grant.

Mrs. Fedorcha stated that grant has not been applied for yet because it is such a cumbersome grant and they do not feel they are ready yet for everything that is involved in that grant.

of the

Mr. Dorshimer stated that he saw in the newspaper this week that in the year 2006 approximately 57% of our students were not proficient on the PSSA in math and reading. We were one two school districts in the Lehigh Valley that did not hit any type of goal.

marks.

Mrs. Fedorcha stated that the AYP is a measurement of the PSSA results. She further stated that we did not meet the target with our IEP population. The IEP population made AYP through Safe Harbor which means that they made enough gains but did not hit the reading and math bench

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

and

Dr. Sham reminded the Board that the October 1, 2007 Board Meeting will be held at LCTI. Dinner will start at 5:30 and regular school board meeting will begin at 7:30. Board members administrator's who would like to attend dinner should contact Sherri Molitoris by September 21, 2007.

Third Day Enrollment Report was distributed.

Dr. Sham recognized the following staff members who retired from our district this year and presented them with a gift. They were James A. Brown, Sr., Susanne M. Christman, Terry A. Jenkins, Janet E. Kern, Lorraine E. Marsh, Deborah R. Moreira, Larry C. Parry, and MaryAnne Shafer.

to
state.

He addressed a question that was raised by Mrs. Kulp at the Buildings and Grounds meeting the other night which was, could the board room/administrative area be renovated into classrooms to reduce the cost of the actual project. After talking with Barry Brobst it would be much more costly to renovate that area then building the classroom space. When you renovate as opposed building new there is a different formula for the amount of reimbursement you get from the Administration offices would have to be located in a different place and if that would involve construction of a new administration building, that is not reimbursable.

PERSONNEL
Education

Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Ganser, that the Board of approves the following personnel items:

Co-Curricular	Camille Vernarr	Elementary Band Advisor	\$ 747.32
Positions	Lora Krum	Elementary Chorus Advisor	\$ 560.48
2007-2008			

Family
Medical
Leave

Approve the request of employee #2840, Slatington Elementary teacher, to take a twelve week family medical leave beginning on November 1, 2007. She plans to return to her current teaching position on or about January 28, 2008, the first day of the second semester of the school year.

Salary
Adjustments

Acknowledge the following instructional aides who have completed the requirements per the Memorandum of Understanding for the Educational Support Staff that would entitle them to a salary increase for the 2007-2008 school year:

Michele Custer - \$1.50 per hour
Nancy Wagner - \$1.00 per hour

Substitute-

Approve the following substitute teachers for the 2007-2008 school year at the 2007-2008

Instructional substitute teacher rates as approved on the Supplementary Personnel Salary Schedule:

PERSONNEL
(cont.)

Linda Sarver – Art
 Jeremy Battista – Biology
 Kyle Gumlock – Elementary
 Ricky Guth – All Subject Areas
 Russell Afflerbach – CLIU Guest Teacher
 Wendy Hines – CLIU Guest Teacher
 James Hurst – CLIU Guest Teacher
 Michael Markle – CLIU Guest Teacher
 Richard Noll – CLIU Guest Teacher
 Nancy Ord – CLIU Guest Teacher
 Patricia Passick – CLIU Guest Teacher
 Dennis Pearson – CLIU Guest Teacher
 Richard Rupnik – CLIU Guest Teacher
 Pamela Swartz – CLIU Guest Teacher
 Ann Zullo – CLIU Guest Teacher

Non-Instructional Approve the following individuals as substitute aide for the 2007-2008 school year at the 2007-2008 substitute rate as approved on the Supplementary Personnel Salary Schedule:

Sharon Harvey

Refreshment Stand Volunteers Per school board policy #915, the athletic director recommends the following individuals as volunteer directors of the refreshment stand for the 2007-2008 school year.

Karen Gill
 Dawn Remaley
 Kathi Neff
 Kelly Follweiler
 Cathy Mohrey

Substitute-substitute Instructional Approve the following substitute teachers for the 2007-2008 school year at the 2007-2008 teacher rates as approved on the Supplementary Personnel Salary Schedule:

Corissa Craig

Appointments Non-Instructional

Margaret Blose*
 Assignment:

Personal Care Assistant Peters Elementary School, replacing Nancy Wagner who was administratively transferred

Salary: \$9.88 per hour/6 ½ hrs. per day/5 days per week
 (2007-2008 ESSA Agreement)

Effective: September 11, 2007

*60-Day Probationary Period on or about December 10, 2007

Linda Nails* **

Assignment:

Senior High School Cook's Helper, replacing Lisa House who resigned

Salary: \$7.50 per hour/5 ½ hrs. per day/5 days per week
 (2005-2009 ESPA Agreement)

Effective: September 11, 2007

*60-Day Probationary Period on or about November 9, 2007

** Pending Verification of Clearances

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

NAY: None (0)

Increase Salary Donald Allen Mrs. Ganser made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dengler that the Board of Education authorize a salary increase for Donald Allen, High School Assistant Principal, in the amount of \$3,000, effective July 1, 2007.

PERSONNEL
(cont.)

ROLL CALL:

YEA: Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mr. Ruth (5)

NAY: Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser (4)

Motion Carried.

Increase Salary Greg Derr Mr. Williams made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Follweiler, that the Board of Education authorize a salary increase for Greg Derr, Director of Support Services, in the amount of \$3,000, effective July 1, 2007.

ROLL CALL:

YEA: Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mr. Ruth (5)

NAY: Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mr. Dengler (4)

Motion Carried.

POLICY

Mr. Green made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Giles, that the Board of Education approves the following policy item:

Field Trip Biology I Class – Senior High School – Philadelphia Zoo – October 30, 2007 – Funded through High School Budget and Students

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

NAY: None (0)

OLD
Education
BUSINESS

Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Ganser, that the Board of Education approves that all positions within the district will have a job description.

Dr. Sham asked if Mr. Dorshimer would be looking for a general job description of a teacher.

Mr. Dorshimer said that is correct. The teacher description can be a general job description of a teacher but for other positions within the district that are specific he would like a different job description for that.

Dr. Sham asked if there is any one in particular that he is looking at.

Mr. Dorshimer said the aides do not seem to know what their job description really is.

Mr. Williams said that he would like a time limit on when administration needs to have this completed by.

Mr. Dorshimer said the second board meeting in January and if that will not be able to be met, administration should come back to them with an update.

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

NAY: None (0)

Mr. Dorshimer says he knows in fact that there are doors propped open, left open, unlocked that he wants secured. He wants this to include garage building spaces in the district. There should be no storing of personal vehicles in any of the district buildings.

Dr. Sham said approximately a year ago when this was brought to his attention he sent out a directive memo stating that all doors are to be secured. He agrees with Mr. Dorshimer. This should not be happening. In order for him to deal with this effectively, someone needs to let him know

where the problem exists and then he can deal with it. He will be sending out another memo tomorrow but if anyone sees this happening they are to let him know so he can deal with it.

Mrs. Giles asked in light of the recent staph infection, is there sanitizing spray in the weight room area so when athletes are done using a piece of equipment they can wipe down the machine.

OLD
BUSINESS
(cont.)

Dr. Sham stated that was the resolution for the staph issue at the field house. They will look into whether this is happening with the equipment in the high school.

NEW
Education
BUSINESS

Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Ganser, that the Board of Education approves the following new business items:

2007-2008 District Goals Approve the Northern Lehigh School District Goals and Action Plans for the 2007-2008 school year that were distributed at the September 4, 2007 board meeting.

Bereavement Contract Language Change Direct administration to open discussions with all employee groups and individually contracted employees to revise bereavement day language to:

IMMEDIATE FAMILY

Father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, son, daughter, grandchild, parent-in-law, or near relative who resides in the same household, or any person with whom the employee has made his/her home.

NEAR RELATIVE

Daughter-in-law, son-in-law, first cousin, grandfather, grandmother, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or grandparents-in-law.

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

NAY: None (0)

Renovations Slatington Elementary/Middle School Mr. Williams made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Kulp, that the Board of Education approve to hire Barry Brobst and Architectural Studios to proceed with the Slatington Elementary/Middle School renovation project as recommended by the feasibility study review committee with the intent of submitting Plan Con A prior to the Thanksgiving Holiday, November 2007.

Mr. Dorshimer said last week administration was directed to find out need for additional employees if the renovation is approved and the 6th grade is moved to the middle school. He would like to know what the global picture is of the continual costs after this renovation is completed and the buildings are in use.

Dr. Sham said that he is anticipating the addition of one fulltime custodian. Mrs. Chamberlain stated that she met with Mr. Leonzi, Middle School Guidance Counselor and Dr. Marcincin, and barring no unforeseen changes, the special teachers at the elementary school would be shared at the middle school and the only addition in staff would be a clerical position at the middle school.

Mr. Dorshimer asked Dr. Marcincin how many secretaries do we have for the guidance office.

Dr. Marcincin said one.

Mr. Dorshimer said that answered his question. Why would moving one grade, 153 students, over to the middle school cause a need for a guidance counselor secretary when there is almost 600 kids in the elementary school with only one secretary.

Mrs. Chamberlain said that with the 6th grade over there they would be a school within a school running on a separate schedule. This person would be used to create the separate schedule and additional paperwork.

Mr. Dorshimer said that we currently do not schedule 6th grade now. They stay with one teacher right?

and

Dr. Marcincin said that the 6th grade rotates. They have their home base teacher for reading English and then they rotate for social studies, science and math. Currently the teacher's are dividing the kids around.

**OLD
BUSINESS
(cont.)**

Dr. Sham said that the Board asked for the speculation on additional staff that was needed and the list we are giving you is our suggestion but that does not mean the Board needs to do as we suggest.

Dr. Marcincin said the elementary school has an office aide that assists the guidance counselor.

Mr. Ruth asked if there was a cost for the architect to complete the Plan Con.

Barry Brobst said the contract you will be voting on has a fee of 7% of the construction cost. Plan Con A & B completed would be about 15% of the fee. Plan Con D & E another 15%. By the time you are ready to bid the project you will have paid approximately 80% of the fee and the last 20% is paid during the actual years of construction.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

April Krempasky – Washington Township – Does the district get reimbursement from the state for construction projects?

Dr. Sham said yes.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

April Krempasky can you tell me approximately how much reimbursement we will get.

Dr. Sham said that it depends on the aspect of construction you are talking about. Renovations get reimbursed at a specific rate and new construction gets reimbursed at a different rate. Fortunately because of the age of the building and the kind of construction that is being proposed, the entire project is eligible for some form of reimbursement.

Barry Brobst said this is a very difficult question to answer. PDE is now trying to offer different incentives to districts to do renovation projects rather than building new. The district aide ratio plays into that also. His guess would be 15 – 20% of the project would be reimbursed. That basic amount will be known once Plan Con A & B are complete. It will change once you go through the construction project and the aide ratio changes.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

April Krempasky said that her and her husband are in favor of the renovations. This building is way over due. There is an issue in this building with asbestos and security. If an intruder would come into the building there are no doors to lock. Individual classrooms would allow for better achievement for our students. This community is responsible to provide the safest and best learning environment for our young people, faculty and staff. She is encouraging the Board to proceed with this project.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

Steve Eitner – Washington Township – stated that he is a retired equipment manager from Penn Dot. He is very familiar with buildings and grounds and bidding procedures. His grandson brought home a letter today from school. He does not know how we went from a water leak to asbestos in the floor tiles to a 21 million dollar project.

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Dr. Sham addressed his comment about a water leak, to an asbestos problem to a 21 million dollar project and said what was trying to be conveyed in the letter was that there was a leak in this building which caused carpeting to get moldy. As a result the carpet had to be torn up. As result of tearing up the carpeting it was discovered at that time is that all the tiles in this building have asbestos in it. Currently the tile is ok. It is not friable and not crumbling. At some point in time, that will change. That is one small issue but it is part of what has to be looked at when a decision needs to be made to renovate a building. The air handlers in this building are at the end of their life span.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

Steve Eitner said that is debatable. He said when he worked at Penn Dot he had to bid all his projects out. That would also mean that you bid out an architect. When you need service, over

a certain amount of money, you are required to bid. You just don't go out and hire someone and pay them a million dollars to build you a building. You may be able to do that, but I don't think you can. I think you are really required to bid. You should be required to bid. He does not think the committee of 6 people did a very good study taking into account outside people. He thinks there were people in there that said we need to do this or it might be easier to do this. Peters Elementary can hold 575 students and there are only 450. There is still room at Peters. Move the third grade to Peters School. Today in the paper there was a large article that the Lehigh Valley is going to have no increase in people moving in. We are done absorbing people from New Jersey and New York. Why are we building six more rooms when we don't have utilization of the rooms we have now. He would like the renovation project put off until a really good study can be done with about 8 – 10 people from the audience and they talk to the principals and assistant principals on what is actually needed.

**OLD
BUSINESS
(cont.)**

Dr. Sham said he is highly offended. All the people who were a part of that committee were honestly interested in this. These were good people who looked at this in depth. Does this building need renovations? There is not anybody here or anybody who is in the building or knows anything about the construction of this building can say it does not need to be renovated. Secondly, the interest rates are low. The Board has set aside an amount of money to use for these renovations. As time goes on that amount of money will decrease why the amount of money that it is going to cost to complete the renovations increases. If the Board is serious about the community and their ability to pay for it they will choose to move ahead with the renovations. The longer you wait the more it will cost the district in the future and the more impact it will have on the people in this community. Logically speaking there is not a better time than now to do this.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

Steve Eitner said you did not mention the \$24,000,000 you encumbered prior to Act I so that the citizens would not have a vote. It is left up to nine people to decide how you are going to spend my money.

Dr. Sham said they are elected officials by you.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

Steve Eitner said that \$24,000,000 will decrease every year correct? But only in small amounts.

million

Dr. Sham said that it decreases in varying rates. The first two years it is relatively small but as time goes on that number gets larger until finally you reach a point where you loose over a dollars.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**
shy

Steve Eitner said the Board does not want to take the chance on what the citizens are going to say if they vote against it. If you would give a legitimate reason, I would be all for it. You just away from this issue and that issue. Are you utilizing Peters Elementary to its best capacity?

spaces

Dr. Sham said if you ask either of the principals they will tell you they are at capacity. When you have students in Slatington Elementary that are being taught in the hallway because there is no more space and the space that some of the special education classes are being taught are that are inappropriate. The facts are that this building needs to be renovated. Students are being taught in inappropriate spaces.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

Steve Eitner if we didn't increase any students in the last couple of years, what happened to all the classrooms?

Dr. Sham said we took on an early intervention class for Head Start. We also added full day Kindergarten and couple that with any special education classes have been added to the district that we did not have any say in and all the rooms are utilized.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

Steve Eitner asked why they didn't put something out to the public.

Dr. Sham said information about this has been in our district messenger. It started last year with information about the feasibility study and asking for committee members. If you were here at any of the board meetings or committee meetings, this has been talked about and debated for the past year. We try to communicate as well as we can to the community. Everything also must go out to bid except for services.

Mr. Williams stated that Mr. Eitner talked about not having the knowledge that this was going on. Everyone on the Board probably feels as frustrated as you do to some degree with that. We have meetings. We post them on our web site. He stated that of the people that read the newspapers in this area if he had to guess about 15% of the people in this area read the Times News and 85% read the Morning Call. Unfortunately it seems that the only time we get coverage from the Morning Call is when we are spending a lot of money or something is controversial.

OLD BUSINESS
(cont.)
PUBLIC COMMENT

Kristie Wilk – Washington Township said that Northern Lehigh is the best kept secret in the Lehigh Valley. She has a child in Slatington and a child at Peters and children at home. Her first concern is for the children. The open concept began in the 1970’s but back then class sizes were a lot smaller than they are today. She had the opportunity to visit a school district that had an open concept and she was blown away. She does not know how students can concentrate in that situation. Everyone is talking about the renovations in this building and whether it is needed or not, just look at the ceiling in here. This building needs repair. She would not mind paying the 2.5 mills for two years. She will know that her tax bill will increase by a certain amount of money each year and she will plan for that. She wants her kids to have the best education. Please consider that when you take your vote.

Mrs. Kulp responded to her comment about the 2.5 mills for two years. Paying 2.5 mill for two years will not cover the cost of the renovation project. It is 2.5 mills for this year 2.5 mills for the next year and then that 5 mills continues thereon until the bond is paid off.

Mr. Green said when he was looking at reasons whether to do the project or not, he came up with about 4 or 5. The first reason was growth. There was conversation last week about growth. He is not sure if we are talking about growth of students. He does not think we have any more students then we had 10 – 20 years ago. Look at our statistics of third day enrollment, there clearly are no more students than prior years. Growth is not on the number of students but the types of programs that are being delivered and how they are being delivered. When this building was built, there were no computer classrooms built into it because 35 years ago nobody knew what a computer was. Years later when computers were introduced you needed to make a room for them. That does not mean we had more students but the programs were introduced in a different fashion. Programs that our children are learning now in the past were being taught in 7th, 8th or 9th grade. There are smaller class sizes than years ago which takes up more room. Someone said our population is going to be decreasing. If you realize that part of the long form for reimbursement is justification for space and number of people you have is one of the factors for justification, it looks good for the state to show decreasing numbers, not as much reimbursement. When he drives home he sees new homes being built everywhere or acreage of land being subdivided. When he sees that kind of stuff he does not see our population decreasing. Another reason for doing the project is safety concerns with the office being upstairs and the doors in the front of the building unprotected. Is that worth 21 million dollars? Of course not but if someone breaks in and we have a problem, how do we put a price tag on that? This building was built as open concept. In all the years he has been on the board people have complained about the open concept. This issue has never been addressed. This is an issue that should have been addressed many years ago but it wasn’t. The age of this building is a concern. It is 35 years old. Is it going to fall apart tomorrow? I don’t think so but there is a lot of mechanical equipment that is nearing the end of its useful life. Somewhere along the line that equipment is going to start to break down. An air handler can break down on a Friday night and you can pay overtime for someone to come out and fix it over the weekend or you do it as part of a controlled building project. When someone’s coming in to give us a bid to replace equipment, all at the same time, the price has to be better. Any reimbursement for the project is less money that you have to take out of your pockets and out of the general fund budget. Currently interest rates, from a historical standpoint are at a low rate. They currently are at an attractive rate. He is willing to jump on that rate because he could wait a few months and it could go up half a point. There is the \$10,000,000 scenario. We know that if borrow \$10,000,000 before the end of the year we can save about a half a percent on the interest rate because we borrowed special category of financing at \$10,000,000 or less. We have an opportunity to get a favorable interest rate and also receive another half a percent. Costs are not going to go down. Building materials have leveled off lately but look at what has happened to lumber and copper over the last

growth.
any more
there

building
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upstairs
Of course
This

materials

few years. Lastly, AYP. We are doing better than other local school district in making AYP year after year. We need to keep that going. Educationally, our administration wants it, our teachers want it, our parents want it and our students want it and I think we owe it to them to provide the facility they need. There is one group we have not addressed, tax payers. They have to pay for this project. There was an article in the newspaper the other day that talked about fixed incomes and property tax rebate. The concept was discussed at the finance committee meeting the other night and he feels it is a good idea. He would like to put something with this motion for the senior **OLD** citizens and low income tax payers by adopting a program following these lines. Not for this year **BUSINESS** because our budget is done but administration should look at the possibility of doing that for next **(cont.)** year.

Amended Motion Mr. Green made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Williams, that the Board of Education approves to have administration look into the possibility of adding a property tax rebate program similar to the one already in place by the State of Pennsylvania for senior citizens on low or fixed income.

Mr. Dorshimer said this was discussed at the finance committee meeting. It is a refund to the fixed income, low income, etc. but it is a tax shift. It will shift the taxes to the working class. You are shifting it to the people who now are having a hard time trying to make it. What needs to be done is shift it back to the state itself. We need to shift the cost of some of this stuff back to the state not shift it to the local tax payer. As soon as the Governor and the rest of the legislators of Harrisburg decide to give us their 50% most of the school districts will be alright. If they want to start taking over some of the additional costs that they keep throwing at us, we would be alright. It is about time Harrisburg starts taking over that. He is not in favor of tax shifting onto the other residents of the district that is also having a hard time.

Mr. Williams said Mr. Dorshimer is correct it is a tax shift. He would never favor a program that would be a very large amount but he believes every since he decided to get involved with the Board the one thing he always heard about were the people who are on a very, very low income and they are doing the best to try to hang on to their houses. Those would be the people he would look at, the people who are on the very bottom and are property owners. The state has developed a program. He is not looking for a program that will cost our tax payers huge amounts of money but he believes there has to be something that we can try doing to help out the people who need the help most.

Mr. Green said this program would be for senior citizens on low of fixed incomes. These are the group of people the Board traditionally hears from, that come to the meeting and say I cannot afford this, you are hurting me. At the same time, we hear the younger people who come to the meeting who are still working, there income is increasing and they are saying I'm raising children, I want the educational benefits. The Board is constantly trying to balance those two groups of people.

Mrs. Ganser said that we are just having administration look at the possibility of this type of program. She is hearing that this is something in the grey area whether this will actually take place. We will be at the mercy of the state legislature to actually give this it's blessing so it is more a formality that you are asking the administration to look at this.

Mr. Green said that is incorrect. The program is already in place. There is already a form developed. Eligibility guidelines have already been developed and several other school districts within the Lehigh Valley have already adopted it.

Mrs. Ganser said it is a tax shift, shifting the cost to folks who are already struggling to pay the high taxes right now. If this amendment would pass, it is just to look at getting into the program and see what it would cost our district.

Vote On Amended Motion ROLL CALL:
 YEA: Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mr. Green, Mr. Williams, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Ruth (7)
 NAY: Mrs. Giles, Mrs. Kulp (2)
 Motion Carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Diane Schnaars – Slatington Borough said she has no complaints about the renovations of the building. She has no children in the district. She has to trust that what is being said is correct and that the renovations are needed. Her concern is that she thinks the school board is rushing into this project. Dr. Sham is only going to be here another year. She thinks the Board should wait a year to see how relations are with the new superintendent, what kind of ideas the new superintendent has and how the new superintendent and the Board at that time work together. If the Board believes in this project they should start to talk to over the district. Not just in a newsletter, on a web site but actual discussion with the district. Possibly conduct tours to show the community what needs to be done their cooperation. If people really know what is going on, they would be willing to Take time to educate the public and talk about this renovation if you all believe in it. Board should wait on any construction until there is a new superintendent.

people all **OLD**
people in **BUSINESS**
and get **(cont.)**
cooperate.
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Mr. Dorshimer said again that the Board has not rushed into the decision to renovate. He has been on the Board for 14 years and this building has been discussed many times. There was a study done. We asked for volunteers to be a part of a committee to look at the renovations. We got 6 people out of the entire district. His biggest concern on being on this Board is how do we get enough people to sit in this audience to find out what is going on in this district. He is constantly confronted by people out in the public asking him questions. He continues to tell them that he has 2200 students in this district and that he does not spend money frivolously. He does not know how to get the community to these meetings. There is a Community Relations Committee that meets every month. The only time people ever come out is when the Board is going to raise their taxes. If this does not pass tonight he will push for it to go to referendum.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Robert Cox – Washington Township said that the last couple of weeks when he has been traveling there have been traffic counters on Best Station Road and you do not have traffic counters for a two lot sub division. He said he knows of one parcel over 100 acres that is up for sale and will be developed. Changes to this building over the years have been an addition of an elevator, the fixing of a back door and a computer classroom. We have the same number of students as years ago but many more programs. With the foresight of a previous Board, the finances for this renovation are already in place. There is some discussion that this is being rushed. About 12 years ago we started to talk about renovating the middle school but the high school had to be renovated first to move the 9th grade to the high school with the thought to eventually bring the 6th grade to the middle. That is not rushing the decision. This has been talked about, planning has been done and programs have been put in place. We are here for the kids. They are being taught in the hallways. We need to think about those kids. There has been talk about waiting until a new superintendent is in place. Discussion and planning about this building has been happening prior to this superintendent. He hopes the board will make the right decision.

addition
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school

PUBLIC COMMENT

Walt McRae – He has two students, one in Slatington Elementary and one in the high school. He wanted to give the Board a snap shot of his experience. He worked a few years ago with a student who had cerebral palsy. His classroom was in the corner of the cafeteria. That was the only place in the entire school to put his classroom. That is not the best educational environment for a student with disabilities. They had students taking tests in the hallways because there was no other resource room for these students to take their tests. Working with teachers, he sees their frustration. There is nothing more frustrating than sending students into a hallway to take a test when they have friends and people walking by them in the hallway. They can not do well concentrating in that type of an environment. If that is what is happening at this school then the Board needs to do the right thing which is to put them in the correct educational environment. That school district is the same size as this one. They were also debating a middle school renovation project. They had the same challenges that this Board is currently going through. They voted against doing the renovations. Now five years later they are moving ahead with the renovation project but they can not afford the middle school that was originally proposed.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

Tommy Papay – Washington Township wanted to know why the letter just came out today. This letter could have come out over a week ago. He is not sure if we need this project or not. He is just wandering why there is such a rush to get this approved to save a half percent interest. In the Morning Call yesterday there was an article that said, "Many of

percent

investment month." wait till spring and because there is

pros are betting the Federal Reserve will cut their bench mark interest rates this What is the rush? Why can't we wait and put it on referendum? Let's just make a more intelligent decision about it. He hopes they will consider that an election coming up.

Mrs. Ganser wanted to clarify with Mr. Brobst that his costs are included in the 21 million dollar amount.

OLD BUSINESS (cont.)

Mr. Brobst said that is correct his cost is included.

Mrs. Ganser asked best case scenario on reimbursement on a 21 million dollar project would be about 4.2 million. Would that be safe to assume?

Mr. Brobst said he wishes that part was that simple. She may not be wrong and until he actually runs those numbers it is a guess and he does not want to guess higher. His guess would be 15 – 20% of the total cost but it could be higher.

Mrs. Ganser stated that she also saw the letter that was printed. The cost in the letter states 2.5 mills per year for the first two years. After that we are not sure what it is going to cost. There is no doubt that this building does need renovations. Having a state of the art building would be good if we had state of the art money. We do not have that in this district. Reality is we have an extremely high population of retirees and people on fixed incomes and statistically she does not see a lot of people moving here. The cost of a home in our school district has significantly decreased. The developments that are going up are maybe for retirees and empty nesters. It is a shame that children have to be in such dire situations but looking at this a little more, seeing if there is a more economically way to do this, she would be more than happy to accomplish that.

million

Mr. Dorshimer stated that currently the renovations will cost between 19.9 million and 21.5 until final figures come in after we go out for bid. What we do know is that if we borrow our limit and go out for the \$10,000,000 this year we need 1.89 mills to do this. That 1.89 mills will need to be added this coming year. If the following year we go out for the \$14,000,000 we will need another 3.08 mills. We are talking about 5 mill increase in the 2009-2010 school year to cover the cost of the bond issue and we will be paying on this bond until 2023.

Vote On Motion

ROLL CALL:
YEA: Mr. Green, Mr. Williams, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Ruth (4)
NAY: Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Follweiler (5)
Motion Defeated.

Mr. Dorshimer asked the five people who voted no, where do we go from here. What are we going to do with this building? Are we just going to sit back and let this building go? How do we replace the ceiling tiles and how do we make repairs.

Mr. Dengler said this should be talked about at our buildings and grounds meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Cox – Washington Township asked for the people who voted no to raise their hands.

Mrs. Ganser said it would be a part of the permanent record.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Cox said he knew that but he will not get that information for awhile.

Mr. Ruth, as chairperson for the search committee for a new superintendent, distributed costs paperwork from PSBA and CLIU #21. His recommendation is that CLIU #21 attend the October 1, 2007 school board meeting at LCTI and give a presentation.

Mrs. Ganser said that was a good idea.

Mr. Green stated that he would like Mr. Ruth to also contact PSBA to attend the meeting and also give a presentation. CLIU cost less but he is not sure if they will be offering the same services that PSBA will provide.

- FINANCIAL** Mrs. Ganser made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dengler, that the Board of Education approves the following financial items:
- Financial Reports Approve the Following Financial Reports:
 General Fund month of August
 Athletic Fund month of August
- FINANCIAL (cont.)** Capital Reserve month of August
 Cafeteria Fund month of August
- Payment of Bills Approve the Following List of Bills:
 General Fund months of August and September
 Capital Project Fund for month of August and September
 Cafeteria Fund month of August
 Athletic Fund month of August
- School for Dentist Approve to appoint Dr. Harry Schleifer of Professional Dental Associates as the school dentist the 2007-2008 school year at the quoted fee of \$1.00 per dental exam needed.
- School as Physician Approve to appoint Dr. Nicole Sully and Dr. Amy Steigerwalt of Parkland Family Health Center school physicians for the 2007-2008 school year. The fee for grade level physicals will be \$20.00 per physical needed. Consultant services will be provided at no charge.
- Pennsylvania Trust Agreement Authorize administration to enter into an agreement with Pennsylvania Trust for the provision of GASB 45 Valuation Services. The valuation will be performed by Conrad Siegel Actuaries at a cost not to exceed \$7,000.
- YEA: Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mr. Ruth (9)
 NAY: None (0)
- INFORMATION** Minutes of the Borough of Slatington Parks & Recreation Commission meeting held on August 20, 2007 were distributed.
- Minutes of the Lehigh Carbon Community College Board of Trustees meeting held on August 2, 2007 were distributed.
- RECOGNITION OF GUESTS** Chip Klocek – Washington Township said that as members of the Board they can sit up there and preach about saving money but they have an obligation to the children of this district. There are real issues with this building. He does not have any authority to make any offers or proposals but he is going to throw one out there for the Board to consider. This building still needs to be fixed. We need to find the solution. You have kids being taught in the hallway. You have a building that is a natural disaster waiting to happen if you have an intruder. Let's take the Slatington Option #2 and get the renovation done. It is a compromise. It will not solve all the issues but we need to do something for the kids of this community and it is your obligation to make that happen.
- PUBLIC COMMENT** Shawn Green – Peters Elementary Teacher his wife is a special education teacher at Slatington Elementary. He would like to invite Board members to come to the building and see what is going on in the building. He is really concerned that his wife is teaching 18 special education students in a closet area.
- PUBLIC COMMENT** Lorriane Marsh – Slatington Borough why don't you ask contractors within Northern Lehigh to do the work because that way the money comes right back to us. The money stays in Northern Lehigh with the people that have to pay the taxes here.

Mr. Ruth said that all our projects have to be bid and then we must take the lowest bidder unless something extraordinary comes up.

Dr. Sham said it is unfortunate because at least the majority of the decision tonight those folks took a solemn oath and in that oath clearly one of the first items is to do the best for the students of this district. What he feels happens tonight you have not lived up to your responsibility. Unfortunately that will come back and bite you at sometime in the future. He also agrees with Mr. Klocek they now have an obligation to look at this in some other fashion. You have an obligation but whether you choose to accept it or not is another story. This is clearly not a recommendation of what happened here tonight, not a recommendation of administration nor administration be held responsible for that decision at some point in the future but the Board will be held responsible for it.

will RECOGNITION OF GUESTS (cont.)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kristie Wilk – Washington Township expressed her disappointment. She stated that at her own when she chooses to do a renovation she does not do it piece meal because it will cost more money. By having voted down this renovation project and now will be replacing and fixing things as it becomes urgently necessary, the cost to the district will be much greater.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Robert Reiser – Washington Township said he feels as a tax payer it is his own ignorance for having kept up with this material. He asked if there was any benefit to the school district if they went with a green concept.

Plan to

Dr. Sham said there it is benefit. That is something that would have been looked into during Con A & B because there could have been some additional reimbursement if they had chosen to go with green engineering. That again is something that is decided once you make the choice move into the building project.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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Robert Reiser addressed the board with the tax rebate issue. Mr. Dorshimer stated that this tax rebate would shift the burden to the working man. Our system, whether at a local, state or national level has this ability to enable people to not do something. People need to take responsibility for their financial decisions they make in life. He understands that people have hard times but they can't continuously have hard times and in order to help out those people turn to the working man to pick up the slack.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Ganser, that the regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh School District Board of School Directors is adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan C. Dorshimer
Secretary

ATTEST: _____ President
Peter A. Ruth