

**NORTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regular Meeting
Board Minutes**

**Slatington, PA
February 12, 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 7:37 p.m. on Monday, February 12, 2007 in the gymnasium of Slatington Elementary School.

ROLL CALL

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

Members absent: (0)

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

VISITORS

Approximately seventy-six visitors attended the meeting in addition to Terry Ahner reporter for The Times News.

Mr. Ruth stated that on January 3, 2007 they had an executive session to discuss personnel and negotiation reasons and they also had one prior to this evening's meeting.

Mr. Ruth informed the public and school board that Mr. Beers is currently at the Mahoning Valley Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, but because of some of the important issues on the agenda this evening they have set up a conference call which allows him to be present and participate in the meeting.

Mrs. Ganser asked if we had consulted with the solicitor on whether this telephone conference call can take place.

Dr. Sham stated that we have verification from Ellis Katz that this is permitted. He also stated that there is a PSBA document that deals with voting by speaker phone which clearly says it is permitted. While it is not something that they would recommend doing on a regular basis, but where there are extenuating circumstances of an extraordinary nature, there is nothing that would prevent a board from doing this. There is also legal case that they have sighted in their document as substantiation for allowing it. In addition, he said that this also has been done in our school district before. He also referenced an opinion that he received from the IU that says this is permissible, but that in order for this to happen the person should be able to be heard and be present from the beginning of the board meeting until the end.

Mrs. Ganser stated that her recollection of the conference call that happened at a prior school board meeting, the person who was not present did not vote. He just offered opinion and then hung up. Mrs. Ganser said that if we do this the person on the other end of the phone must be in tune with everything that the group is discussing. It must be understood and we will have to make sure it is well explained and we have to confirm that it is understood. Mrs. Ganser stated that she is very uncomfortable with this situation. She said that there are other circumstances that she would like to discuss but she does not want to discuss that in the open public. She said that she felt the board should take a vote on whether to allow this to continue.

Mrs. Giles said that she also is not comfortable with this. She said she did talk with someone at PSBA and although this is legal, it is not recommended. She said that because Mr. Beers is in rehabilitation he may not be completely aware of what is going on. She said that if we do take a vote on this tonight she will abstain from the vote or vote into the negative because of these circumstances.

Mr. Ruth asked Mr. Beers if he could hear what was going on and he asked him if he felt he was capable of making sound and rational decisions.

Mr. Beers said he feels better than he did the other night.

Mr. Williams said that everyone has stated that this is something that is legal. Mr. Williams said he also has his doubt and as said, this is something that is not recommended to be doing. He stated that he also went out onto the PSBA website and printed the case that Dr. Sham referenced earlier. He said that it specifically says that the member must be able to hear comments of and speak to all those present at the meeting and that all those present at the meeting are able to hear the comments of and speak to the absent member at the same time. He said instead of saying we can not do this, he would rather say let's attempt to do this and if we run into a problem then we will have to deal with that problem. As long as Frank is there, can hear us, and speak to us, he is a publicly elected official from this community. He stated that if he was not able to be there this evening that he would want to have the same opportunity to be able to call in, especially when there are two very big issues on this evening's agenda and the community would want their elected officials to vote on.

Mr. Follweiler says that he also is not happy with having to hold a board meeting this way but Dr. Sham and others have said this is legal so we need to continue on.

Motion
Conference
Call

Mrs. Ganser made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Giles, to take a vote on whether the Board should allow the conference call to take place.

Mr. Green stated the he did not understand the grounds for this motion. He stated that the chair has made a decision that this is legal. If someone wants to appeal the decision of the chair they can do that as a point of order. He said that making a motion to not do it when clearly there is legal precedents that says it is allowed.

Rescinded
Motion

Mrs. Ganser rescinded her motion and added as an appeal of the decision of the chair.

Mrs. Giles asked who was with Mr. Beers and Mr. Beers answered that Mrs. Laurie Newman-Mankos was with him. She asked if it was a good idea to have an administrator oversee a board directors decision.

Mr. Ruth said that as the President of the Board he agreed to it because he felt it was a neutral party with him as an administrator, not to influence, but he felt comfortable with her being there.

Motion
Appeal
Decision of
Chair
mean

Mrs. Ganser made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Giles, challenging the decision of the chair who has allowed this conference call to proceed.

Mr. Ruth stated that a vote yes would be to terminate the phone call and a no vote would the conference call can continue.

ROLL CALL:

YEA: Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles (2)

NAY: Mr. Beers, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mr. Green, Mr. Williams, Mr. Ruth (7)

Motion Defeated.

**SPECIAL
BOARD
REPORTS**

Legislative Report - Mr. Gregory S. Williams stated that he received notification that the Spring Legislative Round-up will be Friday morning April 27, 2007 at Troxell Elementary School.

Committee Reports and/or Meetings

Minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting held on February 5, 2007 were distributed.

**SPECIAL
BOARD
REPORTS**
(cont.)

Student Representatives to the Board Report

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

Federal and Other Programs Update - Mrs. Lynne B. Fedorcha reported that we are on board with Highmark Health Tools Grant. The Dual Enrollment Grant has been submitted. We are requesting \$44,000.00. The PSSA writing has started for grade 5, 8, and 11. This year's ESL students will be assessed with a new tool called WIDA (World Class Instructional Design and Assessment). This tool will measure each student's listening, reading, writing and speaking abilities. It is scheduled to be administered between April 2 and 24, 2007. Strengthening Families dates for the Spring session have been scheduled for Wednesday evenings April 4, 11, 18, 25 and May 2, 9, and 16 from 6:00-8:30 p.m. On January 31, 2007 the Administrative Team saw a Data Warehouse demonstration by *OnHand Schools*. Mr. Hrizuk visited Quakertown School District to view a data storage system Pearson Technologies and Lynne Fedorcha visited Palmerton School District to see the software *Performance Tracker*. She will be scheduling more data warehousing demonstrations for the Administrative Team in the near future. If any board member is interested in participating in a demonstration, please contact Sherri Molitoris. Peters Elementary students are participating in a Governor's Fitness Challenge which will be held from January 15 – April 15, 2007. Students are encouraged to dance, walk, bike, run or participate in a team sport or activity. The students record their minutes of physical activity and these minutes are then converted into miles. The top three schools in Pennsylvania with the highest number of miles logged will be selected to receive a \$5,000.00 grant to be used to purchase equipment that will promote physical activity. Mrs. Nicholas reported that there are currently 300 schools participating in this event and at the present time, our school is in fourth place. Mary Smith, High School Guidance Counselor, was awarded Counselor of the Year by the Lehigh Carbon School Counselors Association. Lastly, three of our students received first place at the District II Skills USA Championships. Laura Duerer received first place in Action Skills, Nick Krobath for Internetworking, and Amanda Sandoval for Technical Computer Applications. These students will now continue on to represent the Lehigh Valley at the State Competition. She also distributed minutes of Safe Schools, Head Start Collaboration and Title I.

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

He informed the board that parents are requesting that students be allowed to switch buses for various reasons. He is referring this to the Policy Committee for review.

A concerned parent, who is not happy with the level of noise that is coming from the cafeteria at Peters Elementary, is looking into some grants that will help fund doing some things to reduce the noise in the cafeteria during the lunch periods. Dr. Sham has instructed this parent to come and meet with the Technology/Buildings and Grounds Committee before anything is done. He wants this committee to hear what the exact issue is and then as a committee can point this parent and the district in the right direction.

On Friday at Peters Elementary, there was an issue with a TV that fell off the stand mounted to the wall in one of the classrooms. The bolt and set screw that fastens the TV to the stand worked itself loose and caused the TV to fall off the stand. Over the weekend all the TV stands were checked in the building to make sure they were safe. They are also continuing to check all the TV stands in the middle school and high school to make sure they also are safe.

He informed everyone that if we have a day off from school any day this week due to weather that Friday becomes a make-up snow day and if we have a second day from now until April 5th, April 5th becomes our second snow make-up day. All other snow days will be made up at the end of the school year. LCTI will be closed if there is school on Friday and therefore arrangements will need to be made with the LCTI students.

PERSONNEL Mrs. Giles made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Williams, that the Board of Education approve the following personnel items:

Substitutes - Instructional Approve the following substitute teachers for the 2006-2007 school year at the 2006-2007 substitute teacher rates of \$80.00 for 1-10 non-consecutive days; \$90.00 for 11-20 non-consecutive days; and \$105.00 for 21+ non-consecutive days:

Marissa Walters*
**Pending verification of health physical.*

Volunteer Aides Approve the following unpaid volunteer aide at Peters Elementary for the 2006-2007 school year:

Paul Eible

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

NAY: None (0)

**CONFER-
ENCES** Mr. Green made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dengler, that the Board of Education approve the following conference items:

Doug Reynolds* – Emerging Technologies – February 27, March 27 and April 24, 2007 – CLIU #21 Schnecksville, PA – Registration: \$150.00 - Total Approximate Cost: \$150.00 – Funding: Title IID

Karen Beltz – Tides of Change – March 6 & 7, 2007 – CLIU #21 Schnecksville, PA – Registration: \$200.00 - Total Approximate Cost: \$200.00 – Funding: Slatington Elementary Building Budget

Sharon Karpiszin – Tides of Change – March 6 & 7, 2007 – CLIU #21 Schnecksville, PA – Registration: \$200.00 - Total Approximate Cost: \$200.00 – Funding: Peters Elementary Building Budget

Lynn Haab* – Assessing and Intervening with the Student with Traumatic Brain Injury – Sponsored by CIU#20 – March 6 & 7, 2007 – DeSales University, Center Valley, PA – Registration: \$90.00 - Travel: \$36.00 – Total Approximate Cost: \$126.00 - Funding: IDEA

Michele Dotta* – Assessing and Intervening with the Student with Traumatic Brain Injury – Sponsored by CIU#20 – March 6 & 7, 2007 – DeSales University, Center Valley, PA – Registration: \$90.00 - Travel: \$36.00 – Total Approximate Cost: \$126.00 - Funding: IDEA

Lynne Fedorcha – Building Capacity for Reading Apprenticeship Implementation – Sponsored by WestEd’s Strategic Literacy Initiative – March 29 thru April 1, 2007 – Harrisburg, PA – Registration: \$35.00 (will be refunded) - Travel: \$67.00 - Lodging: \$255.00 – Meals: \$180.00 - Total Approximate Cost: \$502.00 (after refund) – Funding: Curriculum and Instruction Budget

Laurie Newman-Mankos – Building Capacity for Reading Apprenticeship Implementation – Sponsored by WestEd’s Strategic Literacy Initiative – March 29 thru April 1, 2007 – Harrisburg, PA – Registration: \$35.00 (will be refunded) - Lodging: \$255.00 – Meals: \$180.00 - Total Approximate Cost: \$435.00 (after refund) – Funding: Curriculum and Instruction Budget

Kimberly Jones* – Emerging Technologies – Sponsored by CLIU #21 – February 27, March 27 and April 24, 2007 – Schnecksville, PA – Registration: \$150.00 - Total Approximate Cost: \$150.00 – Funding: Accountability Block Grant

*** Due to a possible work stoppage, registration for these conferences will not take place until the last possible moment.**

CONFERENCE
(cont.)

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

POLICY

Mrs. Ganser made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Giles, that the Board of Education approve the following policy items:

Board Policy – First Reading

Approve revisions to existing school board policy #609 – Finances: Investments, as presented after first reading.

Approve new school board policy #100 – Programs: Strategic Plan, as presented after first reading.

Mr. Dorshimer said that policy #609 – Finances: Investments, deals with investments that we put into a designated depository. He is recommending that before the second reading this policy should be returned to the policy committee for a list of depositories.

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

NEW BUSINESS

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

NLEA Collective Bargaining Agreement

Approve to ratify a four-year Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Northern Lehigh School District and the Northern Lehigh Education Association, effective September 1, 2006 through August 31, 2010.

ROLL CALL:

YEA: Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Green, Mr. Williams, Mr. Beers, Mr. Ruth (5)

NAY: Mr. Dengler, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser (3)

ABSTAINED: Mrs. Giles (1)

Mrs. Giles stated that she abstained from the vote because she did not feel comfortable voting under these circumstances.

Motion carried.

FINANCIAL

Mrs. Ganser made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Williams, that the Board of Education approve the following financial items:

Financial Reports

Approve the Following Financial Reports:

1. General Fund month of January
2. Athletic Fund month of January
3. Capital Reserve month of January
4. Cafeteria Fund month of January
5. NLHS Student Activities Account month of January
6. NLHS Scholarship Account month of January
7. NLMS Student Activities Account month of December & January.

Payment of Bills

Approve the Following List of Bills:

1. General Fund months of January and February
2. Athletic Fund month of January
3. Cafeteria Fund month of February

FINANCIAL

(cont.)

Auditing Services 2006-2007	Approve to enter into an agreement with Hutchinson, Gillahan & Freeh, P.C. for auditing services for the year 2006-2007 at a cost of: <div style="margin-left: 100px;">\$18,900.00 Base Fee \$2,250.00 Single Audit \$750.00 AFR (if desired) \$70.00 Per Hour Additional Services</div>
RFP - Physicians	Approve to authorize proper officials to solicit proposals (RFP) for physician services for athletic and state mandated student physicals.
Solicit Bids Fuel	Approve to authorize the proper officials to solicit bids for DIESEL FUEL, #2 HEATING FUEL AND UNLEADED GASOLINE for the period July 1, 2007 thru June 30, 2008.
Solicit Bids HS Security System	Approve to authorize the proper officials to solicit bids for UPGRADE TO HIGH SCHOOL SECURITY-VIDEO SYSTEM.
Solicit Bids Peters Potable Well	Approve to authorize the proper officials to solicit bids for IMPROVEMENTS TO PETERS ELEMENTARY POTABLE WELL. (Required to bring well up to code. Bids will be solicited if estimates indicate need.)
Solicit Bids HS Generator	Approve to authorize the proper officials to solicit bids for HIGH SCHOOL EMERGENCY GENERATOR SYSTEM.
Advertise - Adoption of Referendum Question	Approve to authorize administration to advertise the intent to adopt a resolution for the front end referendum question as required by Act I of 2006.
Real Estate Tax Refund	Authorize a refund of real estate tax payment to Deerhaven Properties, LLC 103 Woodstock Drive Saylorsburg, PA in the amount of \$99.48. The real estate taxes were paid in duplicate. YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green, Mr. Williams, Mr. Ruth (9) NAY: None (0)
Solicit Bids Track Resurfacing	Mr. Green made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dorshimer that the Board of Education approve to authorize the proper officials to solicit bids for RESURFACING OF TRACK AND FIELD EVENT RUNWAYS. YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green, Mr. Williams, Mr. Ruth (9) NAY: None (0)
Advertise - Seek Exception From PDE	Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Williams that he Board of Education approve to authorize administration to advertise the intent to seek exception from backend referendum from the Department of Education (PDE) for Special Education Expenditures in the estimated amount of \$427,876.00 and Retirement Contributions in the estimated amount of \$57,073.00 as required by Act 1 of 2006. YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Dengler, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green, Mr. Williams, Mr. Ruth (9) NAY: None (0)

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Dorshimer again reminded the general public about the Pennsylvania Property Tax and Rebate Program for people that fall within the guidelines. He reminded people that the forms to apply for the program are available in the district office.

INFORMATION

Mr. Ruth advised the general public that the Teacher's Contract still is not a done deal. The Board has approved it but the teachers union still needs to approve the contract.

BUDGET general DISCUSSION

Mrs. Blank distributed the Preliminary Budget that was advertised for viewing by the public and a packet of new initiatives. She showed a power point presentation on the preliminary budget and briefly explained the expenditures, revenues and new initiatives for the 2007-2008 school year. Mrs. Blank also compared and reviewed the new tax millage rate for each county if the board chooses to use Method 1, Method 2 or Method 2 (ii). She opened up the floor for discussion and questions on the budget with board members.

ADOPTION OF PRELIMINARY BUDGET 2007-2008

Mr. Williams made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Green, that the Board of Education adopts the preliminary general fund budget of the Northern Lehigh school District for the 2007-2008 school year in the amount of \$26,947,023.00. This is an increase of \$1,580,010.00 or 6.23% over last year's figures.

The preliminary budget is adopted with a 65.796 (5.504%) mill increase for Lehigh County and a 65.796 (10.853%) mill increase for Northampton County using Method 2 (ii) of Section 672.1 of the Public School Code of 1949.

1. Taxes under Act 511/Act 679 with no changes from 2006-2007:

- 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. An Emergency Municipal Services Tax is shared with coterminous municipalities and Northern Lehigh School District's share is \$5.00.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Donna Kulp – Washington Township ask if we qualify for full Title I funding or do we get enough to just cover salaries.

Mr. Dorshimer asked that in the future we get a more detailed report of the preliminary budget.

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

NAY: None (0)

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Beers made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Ruth, that the regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh School District Board of School Directors is adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

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

NAY: None (0)

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan C. Dorshimer

Secretary

ATTEST: _____ President
Peter A. Ruth