

NORTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Minutes

Slatington, PA

May 10, 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 7:40 p.m. on Monday, May 10, 2004 in the Slatington Elementary School gymnasium.

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, Mr. Phillip Bertolino, Dr. Linda Marcincin, Mrs. Karen Nicholas, Mr. John Hrizuk, Mr. David Papay, Mr. Robert Mack, Mr. Brian Geiger, Ms. Christine Stafford, Mr. Jeffrey Bachman, Ms. Laurie Newman, Ms. Ashley Kunkle, Mrs. Doneta Merkle

VISITORS Approximately 65 visitors attended the meeting, in addition to Terry Ahner, reporter for The Chronicle newspaper, Sharon Minnich, reporter for The Times News, and Stacy Duck, reporter for The Morning Call.

APPROVAL MINUTES Mrs. Ganser made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Follweiler, that the minutes of the regular school board meeting held on April 5, 2004 and the regular school board meeting held on April 12, 2004 be approved and ordered filed.

YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazzard, Ms. Papay, Mr. Green (9)

NAY: None (0)

PUBLIC Mr. Green informed the public that anyone wishing to address the board on any agenda items should

COMMENT ON AGENDA approach the podium; state their name and their address. He also stated that each individual will be allowed five minutes to address the board. The board would like to work through the agenda, accept recognition of guests dealing with anything other than the budget, and then discuss the budget.

SPECIAL BOARD REPORTS Lehigh Career & Technical Institute -- Mrs. Lori H. Geronikos
Mrs. Geronikos informed the board that LCTI applied for several construction mandate waivers and they received all of them.

Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit -- Mr. Bryan C. Dorshimer
Mr. Dorshimer highlighted the items on the CLIU Board Brief which was distributed to all board members.

Lehigh Carbon Community College -- Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr.
Mr. Green announced that the LCCC Lady Cougars are State Champions in softball.

Committee Reports and/or Meetings

Mr. Green appointed Earl Snyder as a member of the Technology/Buildings and Grounds Committee for the 2003-2004 school year.

All board members received a copy of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on April 26, 2004.

Student Representatives To The Board Report -- Ms. Ashley Kunkle distributed a written report and highlighted its contents for the board.

SPECIAL Legislative Report -- Mrs. Lori H. Geronikos

BOARD REPORTS Mrs. Geronikos ask the board and visitors attending the meeting to participate in a letter writing campaign concerning IDEA funding problems that our State has incurred. This letter (Con't.) represents exactly how our district feels with regard to the funding.

Federal and Other Programs --Mrs. Lynne B. Fedorcha

Mrs. Fedorcha reported on the PSSA writing scores for grades 6 and 9 indicating that all of our students in both grades scored over 55% proficient and advanced. The 9th grade class was outstanding where they had 80.1% of their students scoring proficient and advanced. She also reported that two of our students have been accepted into the Governor's School of Excellence.

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

Dr. Marcincin introduced Ms. Marlene Simock advisor of the Elementary Sixth Sense Team who talked about their accomplishments and recognized each member of the team with a certificate.

Mr. Green appointed Jodi Nestor to represent the Northern Lehigh School District Board of School Directors on the Borough of Slatington Parks and Recreation Commission. She will supply the board with copies of the minutes of the meetings and if there are any issues she would need to vote on she would inform the board and some further discussion may be needed.

An Executive Session was held, for personnel and legal issues, at 7:00 p.m. in the boardroom.

PERSONNEL

Mr. Cox made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Hazzard, that the Board of Education approves the following items listed under Personnel:

Co-Curricular Appointments for 2004-2005

Head Boys Basketball Coach – Richard Oertner-- \$6350.78
 Assistant Boys Basketball Coach – Richard Mantz -- \$4127.39
 Assistant Boys Basketball Coach – Dennis Rehrig – 4127.39
 Head Girls Basketball Coach – David Redline -- \$6350.78
 Assistant Girls Basketball Coach – Renee Evans – \$4127.39
 Head Wrestling Coach – Todd Herzog -- \$6350.78
 Assistant Wrestling Coach – Brent Herzog – \$4127.39
 Assistant Wrestling Coach – Glenn Serfass -- \$4127.39
 Cheerleading Advisor – Lillie Mae Borger (Half Stipend of \$2806.54)
 Cheerleading Advisor – Kathy Neff (Half Stipend of \$2806.54)
 Senior High Winter Intramurals – Winter Track – Bryan Geist -- \$743.88
 Senior High Winter Intramurals – Weightlifting – Steve Hlushak -- \$743.88
 Senior High Winter Intramurals – Weightlifting – James Tkach -- \$743.88
 Senior High Scholastic Scrimmage Advisor – Denise Turoscy -- \$743.88

Unpaid Volunteers for 2004-2005 School Year

Approve to appoint the following unpaid volunteers for the 2004-2005 school year:

Robert Hughes – Volunteer Boys Basketball Coach
 Peter Reese – Volunteer Boys Basketball Coach
 Courtney Wertman – Volunteer Girls Basketball Coach

ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Cox, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazzard,
 Ms. Papay, Mr. Green (6)

NAY: Mr. Beers, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler (3)

Motion carried.

POLICY

Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Beers, that the Board of Education approves the disposal list of equipment as presented. The computers, monitors, printers, floppy drives, and miscellaneous items will be sent to a recycler to dispose of in the proper manner in accordance with the EPA. An attempt will be made to sell the networking equipment if possible, otherwise it will be recycled.

YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazzard, Ms. Papay, Mr. Green (9)

NAY: None (0)

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

Treasurer's Report Approve the report of the Treasurer, Mr. Cox, for the month of March 2004 as presented.

Reports (Info Only) All board members received the March 2004 Revenue and Expenditure Reports for the Cafeteria, General and Capital Reserve Funds.

Pay General Fund Bills Approve payment of General Fund bills for the month of March and April 2004 as presented.

NL Refreshment Stand Account/ Sports Account Report Approve the Northern Lehigh Refreshment Stand Account / Northern Lehigh Sports Account Report for the month ending April 30, 2004 as presented.

NL Athletic Fund Report Approve the Northern Lehigh Athletic Fund Report for the month of April 2004 as presented.

NLHS Student Activities Account Approve the Northern Lehigh High School Student Activities Fund statement for the month of April 2004.

YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazzard, Ms. Papay, Mr. Green (9)

NAY: None (0)

Lehigh Career & Technical Institute 2004 Budget Mrs. Geronikos made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Cox, that the Northern Lehigh School District Board of Education approves the Lehigh Career and Technical Institute budget for the 2004-2005 school year totaling \$16,632,070.00, an increase of \$470,660.00 or 2.91% over the 2004-2003-2004 amounts. Northern Lehigh School District's share of the 2004-2005 budget is \$747,775.00, an increase of \$73,328.00 or 10.87% more than the previous year.

ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Cox, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazzard, Mr. Green (4)

NAY: Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Ms. Papay, Mr. Beers (5)

Motion defeated.

Nominations For Treasurer Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Beers, that the Northern Lehigh School District Board of Education approves to elect Mr. Robert J. Cox as Treasurer for the 2004-2005 fiscal year, as required by Section 404 of the Pennsylvania School Code of 1949, as amended.

Close Nominations Mr. Follweiler made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Beers, to close the nominations for Treasurer of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors.

Vote On Closing YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos,

Nominations Mr. Hazzard, Ms. Papay, Mr. Green (9)
 NAY: None (0)

FINANCIAL

(Con't.)

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

Robert J. Cox Mr. Robert J. Cox was unanimously elected Treasurer of the Northern Lehigh Board of School
 Board Treasurer Directors for the 2004-2005 fiscal year. There is no stipend attached to this position.
 2004-2005
 Fiscal year

LEGAL

Notification Mr. Dorshimer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Follweiler, that the Board of Education
 To approves to authorize the Board of Education to have the district's solicitor move ahead with the
 Recreation notification to Recreation Resources, Inc., the stadium bleacher contractor, to inform them that the district is
 Resources, Inc. going to terminate their employment.

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

INFORM- ATION

All board members received a copy of the minutes of the Lehigh Carbon Community College Board
 of Trustees meeting held on April 1, 2004.

RECOGNIT- ION OF GUESTS

Linda Ratz – Washington Township – What is the district's percentage increase of the LCTI budget.

Sheryl Giles – Washington Township – Asked if Dr. Sham received the information that he said contained
 a lot of inaccuracies on a flyer the Taxpayers Association distributed and asked him to share with her
 those inaccuracies. Dr. Sham called her attention to two issues that made the flyer unacceptable: one
 that there was not prior permission given to distribute the flyer and two the factual nature of the items.
 Dr. Sham addressed the items contained in the flyer that were not factual. Mrs. Giles asked for some
 time to give Dr. Sham their documentation and where they came up with all of their numbers and asked
 that at the next meeting she be allowed to present this information and that it could be shared with the
 public.

Melvin Gildner – Washington Township – He indicated that most of the people attending the board
 meeting are doing so because they know that maybe their taxes will be going up. But with what has
 happened in the last couple of months, and making the decisions that you have, is what alarms him and
 a lot of other people – specifically how could you make a decision to spend over \$2 million for the
 stadium project. Mr. Green indicated that there is not one cent in this year's budget to pay for the
 stadium project.

David Edwards – Washington Township – Where is the \$1.5 million left over from the middle school in
 this year's budget?

Courtesy President Green called for a courtesy break at 8:30 p.m. The board reconvened at 8:40 p.m.
 Break

BUDGET Business Manager, Chris Stafford, explained how the State arrives at the amount of money our district
DISCUSSION receives. She also responded to budget questions that she received via email.

Dr. Sham began budget deliberations by reminding the board that they requested that the
 administration finds \$1.6 million in cuts and list each cut by how much it would impact the overall

budget and how much the millage would be reduced. At the last board meeting the board chose to reduce the budget to 6.9 mills, which would have eliminated items on the cut list through item 28.

David Schnaars – Slatington – Asked for more detailed clarification on several line items listed in the preliminary budget.

BUDGET Mr. Green asked the board if they had any questions on the presentation, thoughts on the budget, and
DISCUSSION where they wanted to go with the budget.
(Con't.)

Mr. Beers indicated the line items he wanted to remain in the budget: middle school intramurals, miscellaneous transportation cuts, new textbooks, assistant principal/dean of students (middle school/high school assistant principal becomes full time high school assistant principal), music program transportation, co-curricular activities, transportation, all sports and related services. Everything else should be cut. He thinks volunteers should take tickets at all events. He thinks there should be pay freezes for non-contractual employees and medical contributions for non-contractual employees. He felt this should take the budget down to approximately a 2 mill increase. Mr. Green indicated that in looking at the items quickly it would be higher.

Mr. Hazzard suggested that one time purchases in the budget, most of priority one items, be purchased out of the fund balance and those priority two items and priority three items that come in direct contact with students should not be cut. This should take the budget down approximately 1.1087 or a 5.14 mill increase.

Mrs. Geronikos questioned the principals what will taking the proposed \$5000 out of the elementary budgets do to their buildings. She also asked the high school principals what will taking the proposed \$20,000 out of his building budget do to his building. She stated that she will never vote in favor of cutting an elementary principal.

Mr. Green is not happy with a 6.9 mill increase and would like to see it reduced. He likes the idea of purchasing some one time purchases out of the budgetary reserve; however, one of his concerns is Backend Referendum where we may need some of that money for purchases. Everything on the cut list directly affects the students.

Mr. Dorshimer addressed item #41 the tax collector aide position. He would like to eliminate a central office clerical position if the district already has a person that knows the position. That person could easily be made a clerical person next year if the district moves that office into the central office area. The board has to look at transportation and sports related items. The sports department should find additional money (\$15,000 to \$20,000) to cut and help save the district money. All departments should give a little bit. He has a problem eliminating teachers, but at the same time these are contractual items and by law we can only eliminate positions of teachers that are retiring. Unfortunately the positions of teachers that are retiring need to be looked at. He would like a list of the items that are being cut at the building level for the next meeting.

Mrs. Ganser asked what the participation level was in the intramural program. She also questioned whether the building level cuts could be adjusted. Instead of cutting positions could we look at hiring part-time employees?

Mr. Gronikos asked for clarification on the two social studies teacher positions and the high mathematics teacher position on the cut list and wanted to know what will happen if we do not replace these positions. Mr. Bertolino explained the fallout should these positions not be filled.

Mr. Hazzard asked to have the building principals prioritize some of the cuts that actually affect their building.

Dr. Sham indicated again that he would not recommend going beyond Item #37 on the cut list.

In light of the price of oil, Mr. Beers asked why the windows in the high school were open when it

was 19 degrees this winter.

PUBLIC William Turk – Walnutport Borough – Asked if employees pay towards their health insurance.
COMMENT If the board adopts a 7 mill budget they will be looking at deep troubles for retirees and people in the district.

PUBLIC Mr. Turk suggested increasing the cost of tickets for sporting events. Asked why the district didn't go
COMMENT for a \$2 million bond issue to eliminate a tax increase.
(Con't.)

Patrice Arnold – Washington Township – The top priority of a school board is to educate the children in the district. We must be realistic; we cannot expect a zero mill increase. Everything is increasing in our life and taxes are part of that. We need to be civil and work together. Please do not take away the teachers and people who are running our schools, please do not take away our transportation.

Sheryl Giles – Washington Township – Agrees with everything Ms. Arnold stated, however, what appalls her is the fact that this is the third year that we got next to nothing in state funding so you would think the school district would master the art of responsible spending. Not giving ridiculous salaries and ridiculous pay increases would be good money that could be used for those positions that are listed to be cut.

David Edwards – Washington Township – Asked if the board knows why they are sitting at the board table? Asked if any board members actually saw or reviewed the contracts for the field house? “We put use there to be between the school district and us. Youse don't do your job. Not at all. Youse left me be taken out of here by a police office on Mr. Sham saying I should get out. That's against your own laws, your own rules.”

Linda Ratz – Slatinton Borough – Addressing Mr. Edwards – “I know why you were escorted from that meeting. You made an obscene gesture at that meeting.” Mr. Edwards responds to Mrs. Ratz with a bent arm gesture stating “This means that I'm number one.”

Shawn Surdovel – High School Student – Stated that the board is part of the educational system and that rather than being politicians elected by the taxpayers they should put themselves in the position of administrators and teachers. You shouldn't think what is best for the budget you should think about what is best for the students. Although you are elected by the taxpayers, you are here for the students.

Chad Trego – Slatinton Borough – presented his observation and personal opinion based on some of the recent articles in The Chronicle newspaper.

Sharon Karpiszin – Washington Township – Administrative Secretary at Peters Elementary -- Several years ago the board approved to hire a second person in each elementary office. An aide was added in each, paid an hourly rate, with no benefits. The two highly qualified elementary aides do the same work as personnel in the middle school and high school who are paid as clerk-typists receiving health care, sick days and vacation. The district has added a security system that has caused an increase in the workload in the offices. She invited each board member to spend a day in the elementary office. If at the end of the day you truly believe that the needs of students, parents, visitors, teachers and administrators can be met with one person, make the cuts. Otherwise she asked them to please support the continued employment of the elementary office aides, which she feels should be a clerk-typist position.

Karen Beltz – Slatinton Elementary Office Aide – Presented some figures to the board to let them know the number of people who come through the elementary office. Since September there have been 1860 visitors. There have been 1369 early releases. There have been 651 late arrivals for a total of 3880 people who have come through the office since September. There are custody issues and PFA's that need to be taken into consideration on a daily basis .

David Schnaars – Slatington Borough – Dealing with the money of this district is a very emotional issue. Students of this district deserve the very best education we can afford to give them. We obviously cannot keep spending at the rate we are and offer everything. Feels we are not thinking far enough “out of the box”. In industry there would be a very simple solution. What you would do is call an outside company in to look at what you are doing and offer a suggestion.

Melvin Guildner – Washington Township – Given the way prices are going up with regard to the taxes, does the board or administration foresee anything down the road that we don’t know or see that the state is going to do to change all of this so we don’t have to pay such high taxes.

**ADJOURN-
MENT**

Mr. Follweiler made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Beers, that the regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors be adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

NOTE: Because of employment obligations, Mr. Dorshimer left the meeting at 9:40 p.m.

YEA: Mr. Beers, Mr. Cox, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos,
Mr. Hazzard, Ms. Papay, Mr. Green (8)

NAY: None (0)

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan C. Dorshimer
Secretary

ATTEST: _____ President
Mathias J. Green, Jr.