

**NORTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Board Minutes**

**Slatington, PA  
June 10, 2002**

**PURPOSE** The regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors was called to order by the President, Mr. Gary S. Fedorcha, at 7:43 p.m. on Monday, June 10, 2002, in the gymnasium located in the Slatington Elementary School.

**ROLL CALL** Members present: Mr. Robert J. Cox, Mr. Bryan C. Dorshimer, Mrs. Jane J. Escott, Mrs. Lauren A. Ganser, Mrs. Lori H. Geronikos, Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr., Mr. Jason M. Newhard, Mr. Gary S. Fedorcha (8)

Members absent: Mrs. Sheryl A. Giles (1) (arrived at 7:49 p.m.)

Non-members present: Dr. Nicholas P. Sham, Sr., Mrs. Lynne B. Fedorcha, Mr. Christopher Iacobelli, Dr. Linda Marcincin, Mrs. Karen Nicholas, Mr. John Hrizuk, Mr. David Papay, Mr. Brian Geiger, Mr. Bernard Rockovich, Mr. Jeffrey Bachman, Ms. Laurie Newman, Ms. Pamela Grammes, Mr. Nicholas Sander, and Mrs. Doneta J. Merkle

**VISITORS** Approximately 80 visitors attended the meeting in addition to Sharon Minnich, reporter for The Times News, and Elizabeth Bartolai, reporter for The Morning Call newspapers.

**APPROVE MINUTES** A motion was made by Mr. Newhard, with a second made by Mrs. Ganser, that the minutes of the regular school board meeting held on May 6, 2002 and the regular school board meeting held on May 13, 2002 be approved and ordered filed.

YEA: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (8)

NAY: None (0)

**SPECIAL BOARD REPORTS** Student Representatives To The Board Report -- Mr. Nicholas J. Sander  
Nick Sander gave a report on the Interact Club's involvement in the Running of the Dawgs 5K Run.

Federal and Other Programs – Mrs. Lynne B. Fedorcha  
Mrs. Fedorcha reported that Chris Iacobelli secured a \$500 grant to be used for educational materials in the Slatington Elementary School.

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Nicholas P. Sham, Sr.  
Dr. Sham presented Pamela Grammes with a gift of appreciation for her two year's of service on the board as a student representative.

He reported that the district has received preliminary figures from a roofing company for the high school lobby area roof. They have determined that there is some work that needs to be done to repair the roof.

Some questions have arisen regarding the proximity card reader security system that the district is presently working at installing. Ray DeFrain, the person who did a security assessment of the district and designed the system the district is planning on using, addressed the board and answered any questions they had.

Public Comment Phyllis Owens – Washington Township – Her experience with key cards is that several people walk in right behind a person who uses the key card to open the door.

Cortney Wise – Wanted to know why it is costing Northern Lehigh School District approximately \$79,000 for four schools when it cost Northampton School District less than \$72,000 to get nine schools. Why didn't the district put out a second bid when they found out how expensive the system was?

Dr. Sham gave a report on the Fourth Annual Running of the Dawgs. He publicly thanked Sharon Karpiszin and Janet McKelvey who co-chaired the event. He also thanked all of the approximate 80 people who volunteered to help. Preliminary numbers indicate that the Educational Foundation made approximately \$1200 more than last year. The estimated profit is \$7600.00.

Executive Session An Executive Work Session was held at 7:00 p.m. preceding the meeting for personnel reasons.

**PERSONNEL** A motion was made by Mrs. Escott, with a second made by Mrs. Giles, that the Board of Education approve the following personnel items:

Resignations- Instructional Accept the resignation of Rebecca Rhodes, from her position as secondary music teacher in the high school and middle school, effective August 31, 2002. She has accepted a position in another school district.

Accept the resignation of Thomas Sheehan from his position as guidance counselor in the senior high school. Effective June 28, 2002, Mr. Sheehan will be retiring from the Northern Lehigh School District after thirty-five years of teaching.

Accept the resignation of Jacqueline Sham, from her Slatington Elementary School teaching position, effective June 11, 2002.

Co-Curricular Appointment for 2002-2003

Manuel Guedes – Assistant Football Coach (Shared Stipend)

Gregory Poremba – Assistant Football (Shared Stipend)

Unpaid Vol. Coach Approve the appointment (pending verification of clearances) of the following individual as a volunteer football coach for the 2002-2003 school year: Ryan VanNorman

Leave Without Approve the request of Jennifer Hilbert, Peters Elementary second grade teacher, to take a one-day Pay leave of absence, without pay, on November 27, 2002. She plans to use her two personal days in conjunction with the requested unpaid day. Her request will not be considered a precedent for future requests per correspondence received from the Northern Lehigh Education Association.

Change of Status Approve to authorize the administration to reduce, from fulltime to halftime, the teaching status of Julia Witmer, high school chemistry teacher beginning with the 2002-2003 school year. This change in status is as a result of decreased enrollment.

Request for Sabbatical Leave Of Absence For Educational Purposes Approve the request of Nevin Ranck, high school physics teacher, to take a sabbatical leave of absence for educational purposes during the second semester of the 2002-2003 school year and the second semester of the 2003-2004 school year. During the second semester of the 2002-2003 school year, Mr. Ranck is requesting that he be permitted to teach the Physics II class at the senior high school. Except for the monetary compensation due to him via his sabbatical status, he has waived any monetary compensation that otherwise might be due to him for teaching the second semester 2003 Physics II class. He is however asking for Act 48 credits for teaching the Physics II class and a reduction in the mandatory credits for a sabbatical leave. This request will not be precedent setting for future sabbatical leave requests per correspondence from the Northern Lehigh Education Association.

YEA: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (9)

NAY: None (0)

**POLICY**

A motion was made by Mr. Green, with a second made by Mr. Dorshimer, that the Board of Education approve the following items listed under Policy:

## Conferences

Approve the request of Elizabeth Vasquez,, Laurie Newman, and Dawn Wadsworth, to attend a National Autism Conference and Summer Autism Institute Conference in State College, PA from July 31-August 2, 2002. Expenses for this conference include \$50.00 each for registration, \$90.00 each for meals, \$260.00 each for lodging, \$52.50 for travel, for a total cost of \$1252.50 and will be paid for through IDEA funds.

Approve the Northern Lehigh Middle School Student Activities Account Statement for the month of May 2002.

YEA: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (9)

NAY: None (0)

**NEW  
BUSINESS**

A motion was made by Mr. Cox, with a second made by Mrs. Geronikos, that the Board of Education authorize the continuation of Mr. David Papay as acting principal in the senior high school from July 1, 2002 through December 31, 2002 or pending the hiring of a permanent high school principal at a stipend of \$2500.00.

YEA: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (9)

NAY: None (0)

A motion was made by Mr. Dorshimer, with a second made by Mr. Cox, that the Board of Education authorize awarding of bids for the district security system pending review by our district solicitor, as long as the lowest bidder meets the specs.

Public  
Comment

Terry Bowman – Washington Township – Would the board consider looking at what system Northampton has in an effort to possibly save money. He also asked who is the solicitor and who names the solicitor.

Dave Mulcahy – Walnutport – Northampton's security system is nowhere near as secure as the system we are considering installing.

Jim Stehl – President of Sonotrol security systems – said he was the low bidder at Northern Lehigh for this system. He stated that Northampton School District is very happy with their system. Indicated he sent letters to the district that he could save them money and put in a system that does everything they want except the networking.

Dave Mulcahy – Walnutport – Yes this system would be cheaper up front, however, in maintenance and administration over a very short period of time you would eat that savings up. Doing it right the first time is more important than continually paying and not having the proper system.

ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (5)

NAY: Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green (4)

Motion carried.

**FINANCIAL** A motion was made by Mrs. Geronikos, with a second made by Mr. Dorshimer, that the Board of Education approve following financial items:

Pay Technology Account Bills Approve payment of bills from the Technology Account for the month of April 2002, as presented.

Walnutport Tax Refund Approve a refund for overpayment of Walnutport Real Estate Taxes for the property owners as listed for the month of June.

Award Bids **DIESEL FUEL**

Awarded to Reichenbach's - W.S. Reichenbach & Son, Inc. @  
 - a firm base price of .865 cents per gallon (normal blend)  
 - a firm base price of .883 cents per gallon (70%/30% blend)

**UNLEADED GASOLINE**

Awarded to Reichenbach's - W.S. Reichenbach & Son, Inc. @  
 - a fluctuating base price of .946 cents per gallon

**#2 GRADE FUEL OIL – TRANSPORT DELIVERY OF MORE THAN 6800 GALLONS**

Awarded to Reichenbach's - W.S. Reichenbach & Son, Inc. @  
 - a firm base price of .795 cents per gallon

**#2 GRADE FUEL OIL – TANKWAGON DELIVERY OF LESS THAN 6800 GALLONS**

Awarded to Reichenbach's - W.S. Reichenbach & Son, Inc. @  
 - a firm base price of .94 cents per gallon

CONTRACT PERIOD – JULY 1, 2002 – JUNE 30, 2003

Project Fit America Equipment Approve to except the Project Fit America Equipment donated by MESH and LVH. Installation of this equipment and the playground carpet is estimated to be \$10,000.

Public Comment Linda Faust, representing MESH, informed the public what Project Fit America was.

Michelle Lucien – Slatington – How many schoolbooks would \$10,000 buy? If MESH is willing to donate the equipment, maybe we should look to the community to raise the money to install playground and fitness equipment rather than use our tax dollars.

Install Hollow Metal Doors Approve the installation of a pair of hollow metal doors to gain access to a storage area under the high school auditorium. This work is to be done by Hollenbach Construction, Inc. at a cost of \$3,695.00. Money for this project is to be paid for from the contingency fund of the High School Project.

Pay Construction Bills In July Approve to grant permission to the business office to pay construction bills due during the month of July as required by contract. There is no scheduled board meeting in July.

Approve Change Orders Approve middle school Educational Enhancements Change Orders G-4 in the amount of \$6,471.00 for Hollenbach Construction, Inc., and H-2 in the amount of \$12,096.08 and H-3 in the amount of \$7,448.12 for JBM Plumbing, Inc., and enter into contract for these change orders upon approval of Pennsylvania Department of Education PLANCON I.

**FINANCIAL**

(Con't.)

Approve middle school Auditorium Toilet Room Renovations Change Orders G-5 in the amount of \$33,808.50 for Hollenbach Construction, Inc., and P-2 in the amount of \$16,246.85 for JBM Plumbing, Inc., and enter into contract for these change orders upon approval of Pennsylvania Department of Education PLANCON I.

Door Access  
Control System

Approve to award the contract for a Door Access Control System to Communications Systems, Inc. of Allentown, PA in the amount of \$79,524.00, pending solicitors review. Funds for this project are to be paid from the 2001 AA Extended Funding Bond.

Closed Circuit  
TV System  
Contract

Approve to award the contract for Closed Circuit TV Systems to Communications Systems, Inc. of Allentown, PA in the amount of \$70,933.00. Funds for this project are to be paid from the 2001 AA Extended Funding Bond.

Install Cabling  
In Slatington &  
Peters  
Elementary

Approve to allow CTC Associates to furnish and install the category 5e duplex data cabling for teacher stations and lab upgrades in the Slatington and Peters Elementary Schools. This project is to be completed as defined in accordance with state ITQ pricing. Total cost for this project is to be \$42,946.00 and funds will come from the 2001 AA Extended Funding Bond.

Budgetary  
Transfers

Approve budgetary transfers as presented. (See Attachment)

Appoint  
Insurance  
Brokers

Appoint Hilb, Rogal and Hamilton Company (HRH) Palley Simon Associates as the district insurance broker for Property, Casualty, Liability and Workers' Compensation Insurance for the 2002-2003 school year.

Award  
Insurance

Award insurance coverage for the 2002-2003 school year to the following companies:

1. Commercial Package and Automobile (Vehicle Liability, General Liability Property Insurance and Boiler and Machinery) – Republic Franklin- UTICA National Insurance Company - \$36,160. The renewal is with the same company as last year and the premium is an increase of \$15,122 over last year's rate.
2. Commercial Umbrella Liability Insurance – Crum & Forster Insurance Company - \$15,000. The renewal is with the same company as last year and the premium has increased by \$6,500.
3. School Leaders Errors and Omissions Liability - \$19,458. PSBA Insurance Trust . The renewal is with the same company as last year, and the premium has increased by \$7,179.
4. Worker's Compensation Coverage for the 2001-2002 school year – PSBA Insurance Trust/Old Republic - estimated premium of \$60,625 that is based upon estimated payroll. The renewal is with the same company as last year, and the premium has increased by \$17,467.

Information Only:

1. Please note that the pollution liability policy was awarded in 2000 to American International Specialty Lives Insurance Company for a three-year period at \$8,250.
2. Please note that an Employee Dishonesty Bond for \$275,000 covers public employees of the school district, including faithful performance. This coverage is part of the package premium.

**FINANCIAL** (Con't.)

**Appoint State-Wide Tax Recovery** Approve the appointment of Statewide Tax Recovery as the delinquent per capita tax collector for the district for the 2002-03 school year.

**Appoint AON Consulting** Approve the travel and accident insurance policy with AON Consulting. The policy renews for the 2002-03 school year at a \$500 yearly premium that is no increase during the three-year period expiring August 13, 2003.

**Maintenance Agreement -- Allentown Sewing Machine Outlet** Approve a maintenance agreement for the 2002-03 school year with Allentown Sewing Machine Outlet. The agreement covers sewing machines located in the Middle School as follows:

20 machines at \$25 per machine plus parts = \$500 plus parts

ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Cox (7)  
NAY: Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard (2)

Motion carried.

**Pay General Bills** A motion was made by Mr. Green, with a second made by Mrs. Giles, that the Board of Education approve Fund payment of General Fund bills for the month of April 2002, as presented.

YEA: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (9)

NAY: None (0)

**CORRESPONDENCE** A letter was received from Senator Dent regarding our position on House Bill 621.

A letter was received from Sonotrol.

Mrs. Geronikos thanked the PTO for all of their efforts in donating countless time and money to our school on behalf of our students. She made particular mention of the Lighted Bulletin Board School Signs installed outside of the Peters Elementary and most recently the Slatington Elementary School.

**INFORMATION** Notification has been received from the Pennsylvania Department of Education of their approval of PlanCon Part I: Interim Reporting for additions/alterations of the middle school. Copies of these documents and appended materials will be entered into the official minutes of this meeting.

**RECOGNITION OF GUESTS** Denise Plotsko – Washington Township – Teacher in district for 31 years. Addressed the board as to why they voted down an early retirement incentive.

Janet Kern – Walnutport – President NLEA – Informed the board about the Northern Lehigh PDAP teacher test results that were not reported in the Morning Call newspaper.

Art George – Slatington – Mailed letter to all board members, he hoped they had an opportunity to read it. There were soccer signups the last two weekends and he reported that 325-350 children will be playing soccer this fall.

Sherri Molitoris – PTO Treasurer – Reported that the PTO spent approximately \$15,000 on the two signs that were installed at the elementary schools thanks to the Kids Stuff Book Sale.

Patrice Arnold – Washington Township – PTO President – the board and administration can't do it alone. They need the help of volunteer organizations.

Recess President Fedorcha called for a short recess at 9:00 p.m. The board reconvened at 9:14 p.m.

Executive Session President Fedorcha called for an executive session for personnel reasons at 9:15 p.m. The board reconvened at 9:50 p.m.

**BUDGET  
DELIBER-  
ATIONS**

Dr. Sham recounted what the board has done to date with the budget and reviewed a new prioritized list of cuts.

3.0 Mill Increase

A motion was made by Mrs. Geronikos, with a second made by Mrs. Escott that the Board of Education approve to reduce the millage to a 3.0 mill increase changing the A.D. Position utilizing Option 1(1/2 time AD plus an assistant in the district), hire our own psychologist, transportation cuts, reduce professional services/buildings & grounds, remove Saxon Phonics Kit, approve a Sabbatical at the high school, remove National Conference, and remove summer academies.

Public Comment

Steve Bandzi – Is replacing the acting principal position included in prioritized list?

Amend Motion  
2.45 Mill Increase

A motion was made by Mr. Green, with a second made by Mr. Cox, to amend the previous motion to further reduce the millage to the 3 mill item listed on the prioritized cut list plus an extra \$100,000 (\$60,000 in special education and \$40,000 in transportation), plus the \$10,000 that was found in the budget to install playground and fitness equipment, to bring the millage increase to 2.45 mills.

Mr. Green stated that he was not certain if the board wanted this statement part of the motion, however, he stated that if there are any additional retirements or the Commonwealth comes up with any additional money, that money could be used in the budget at the administrations discretion and add items back into the budget.

Public Comment

Dina Wanamaker – She understands that cuts need to be made, but don't cut programs from the children.

Lori Katz – She has a problem with the board cutting band competitions. The band has just as much school spirit, if not more than some of the other athletic programs in the school. It should be reconsidered.

Steve Bandzi – Why isn't the principal position for the high school listed in the cuts?

Patrice Arnold – Read a list of reasons why not to cut the budget down to 2.5 mills.

Jack Bechel – Slatington – Don't cut the marching band competitions. Several years ago this band won the equivalent of a district title in sports.

Sharon Karpiszin – Washington Township – At a previous board meeting there was a question asked regarding two major increases in the budget. She has attended all the meetings and she hasn't heard those questions answered. One was an increase in transportation in the amount of \$103,000 and the other was an increased payment to the intermediate unit for \$96,000. Could you explain those increases?

Ted Reinert – Washington Township – Had a question on policy with regard to voting on motions.

Amend Amended Motion  
2.5 Mill

Based on public comment, Mr. Green felt that there was some merit in keeping the marching band competitions in the budget. A motion was made by Mr. Green, with a second made by Mr. Cox, that \$7,000 be put back into the budget for the marching band competitions and merely make that up with the \$10,000 that was found to purchase playground and fitness equipment, increasing the

Increase budget to a 2.5 mill increase.

Public Comment Steven Owens – Washington Township – How much money would we save if we hired Mr. Papay as opposed to hiring a new person?

Vote On Amendment 2.5 Mills  
 ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer (4)  
 NAY: Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Fedorcha (5)  
 Motion defeated.

Amend Original Motion 2.85 Mills  
 A motion was made by Mrs. Ganser, with a second made by Mr. Dorshimer, that the Board of Education approve to amend the original motion to further reduce the millage to a 2.85 mill increase.

Vote On Amendment 2.85 Mills  
 ROLL CALL: YEA: Mrs. Ganser, Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Dorshimer (4)  
 NAY: Mrs. Geronikos, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Cox, Mrs. Escott, Mr. Fedorcha (5)  
 Motion defeated.

Vote On Original Motion 3.0 Mills  
 ROLL CALL: YEA: Mrs. Geronikos, Mrs. Giles, Mrs. Escott, Mr. Fedorcha (4)  
 NAY: Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Ganser (5)  
 Motion defeated.

2.99 Mill Increase  
 A motion was made by Mrs. Geronikos, with a second made by Mrs. Giles, that the Board of Education approve to adopt a 2002-2003 Northern Lehigh School District Budget with a 2.99 mill increase.

Public Comment Drew Fatzinger – Asked one question: “When have you ever had a room full of taxpayers who are telling you to go for a 3.0 mill increase?”

Steve Bandzi – There are a lot of senior citizens in our community who are living on a fixed income and cannot afford tax increases.

Vote On 2.99 Mill Increase  
 ROLL CALL: YEA: Mrs. Giles, Mr. Newhard, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Fedorcha (5)  
 NAY: Mr. Green, Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Ganser (4)  
 Motion carried.

**ADJOURN-  
MENT**

A motion was made by Mr. Geronikos, with a second made by Mr. Newhard that the regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors be adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Newhard, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Geronikos, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Fedorcha (5)  
 NAY: Mr. Green, Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Ganser (4)  
 Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane J. Escott  
 Secretary

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_ President  
 Gary S. Fedorcha