

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

**Slatington, PA**  
**February 28, 2023**

**Civility and Decorum** – District officials and members of the public are expected to conduct themselves with civility and to afford each other a measure of dignity and respect. Shouting, personal insults, and attacks or any conduct that disrupts the flow of business is considered to be out of order. Members of the public are to direct their comments to the Board in its entirety, cannot single out Board Members for response, nor can a member of the public address specific issues with other members of the community who may be present at the meeting or who are virtually present if it is a virtual or hybrid meeting. In addition, members of the community shall not bring signs or placards to the meeting and shall not applaud or engage in any actions that would impede another community member's right to make comments at the meeting. At the discretion of the Board/Board President, individuals who are disruptive shall be subject to removal from the venue of the Board meeting, unless the disruptive individual agrees to maintain civility and decorum.

**PURPOSE** The special meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors was called to order by the President, Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr., at 6:22 p.m. on Tuesday, February 28, 2023, in the Northern Lehigh Administration Building Board Room..

**ROLL CALL** Members present: Mr. Chad Christman, Mr. Robin T. Distler, Mr. Gary S. Fedorcha, Mrs. Rhonda Frantz, Mr. Mathias Green, Jr., Mr. Robert L. Kern, Jr., and Mrs. Donna M. Kulp (7)

Members absent: Mrs. Gale Husack (1)

Non-members present: Mr. Matthew Link, Mr. Eric Hill, Atty. Avery Smith, Mr. James Schnyderite and Mr. Terry Ahner (Press).

**VISITORS** Approximately 6 visitors attended the meeting and seventy-five visitors viewed the meeting.

Executive Session Mr. Green commented for the record, executive session was originally schedule for the end of he the meeting and was moved up because personnel items kind of bubbled up and we had to take care of that. At this point, I would like to appoint Mrs. Kulp as the secretary this evening. So, if you could take the roll please.

**INTERVIEWS OF CANDIDATES TO FILL SCHOOL BOARD VACANCY** Mr. Green commented okay the purpose of the meeting tonight is to interview the two candidates who have applied for the vacant board seat. Mrs. Natalie Snyder and Mrs. Alice Wanamaker. The policy that we'll follow tonight is I guess Natalie is scheduled to go first. So, she will be asked a few questions. We would like the other candidate to vacate the room, so you know the questions are real quiet because they're really tough questions, you know. Not yet, you don't have to go yet. So, after that's done, I will open the floor for nominations. Anyone on the board can nominate either candidate. If someone wants to nominate the second candidate, that will be possible. We can have the second candidate nominated. Then, motion to close nominations. At that point, we will vote on the first candidate, if the first candidate receives five affirmative votes then that person is elected as our new school board member. If not, we will go to the second person. I will tell you now, if neither person gets five votes on the first go around, I will open it again for the second round of nominations to see where we go. If we don't get anyone after two rounds, I guess we're going to have to put our heads together and see where we stand and we'll kind of go from there. So, Mr. Link will be asking the questions, correct?

Mr. Link commented that is correct.

Mr. Green commented alright. We have received copies of both of your resumes so we have those there. I think Natalie's names first, so Natalie would take the chair and Alice would vacate the room that would be wonderful.

Mr. Link commented Alice if you could please just shut the door as you step out, thank you. Mr. Green I would like to note for the minutes that Mr. Kern has arrived at approximately 6:25 p.m. Thank you.

Mr. Link commented Hi Mrs. Snyder. Thank you for applying and thank you for coming in this evening. We also appreciate your patience with having to reschedule due to the weather last evening. Thank you. So, if you're all set, I'll jump in. We have three questions this evening. Okay, so Mrs. Snyder, why are you interested in being on the school board?

**INTERVIEWS**  
**OF CANDI-**  
**DATES TO**  
**FILL SCHOOL**  
**BOARD**  
**VACANCY**  
**(cont.)**

Mrs. Snyder commented okay, well as you all are aware, I have been attending the board meetings for about two to three years now and I attend the committee meetings as well. When I don't attend, I do listen to them on youtube. I am grateful to be a member of the career and counseling advisory. I am proud to be a part of that because in that, I am able to be a voice for the students and express some of the concerns that they have. So, I feel that if I am elected to fill this seat, I can continue to be a voice for them as well as those people in the community. I also feel that I have the time to devote and the passion to serve the students in the community. I want to be the voice for the students in our community. I currently have one child who is a junior at Northern Lehigh and he attends LCTI half-time. I have my youngest daughter who is a sophomore, but she is currently attending a private school by her choice. My oldest child is a former student of Northern Lehigh and she is attending Bloomsburg University.. In her first semester at Bloom she expressed to me that other students from other school districts were more advanced than she was and she was concerned that she might not be able to meet the requirements of the honors program at Bloom. Additionally, there have been a few students in my neighborhood that I engage in conversations with and with their experiences I felt that I wanted to be able to help them to have more positive experiences here at Northern Lehigh, so therefore, I felt that if I had a seat on the board, I could be able to voice and I'd be the voice for them. Sometimes they don't speak positively about their experiences and I want to hear them speak positively and I want to see them grow here and have a good experience. I also want to assist the district in reaching their goals and accomplishing the vision of Northern Lehigh School District. I want our students to be able to achieve their highest academic potential and for them to be proud of their accomplishments as they move on to future endeavors. Lastly, I want to form a bond with school members, personnel, and the community. I want that bond to lead to an increased trust between the school district and students in the community. That's pretty much why I want to be on the board.

Mr. Link commented thank you. The next question is what do you feel you can offer the school board?

Mrs. Snyder commented so I am a team player who is reliable, committed and flexible. I have active listening skills which helps me to build effective relationships and collaborate well with others. As a goal-oriented and natural problem solver, I have the ability to use critical thinking and analytical skills to solve problems and make good decisions. I am always open to being educated on topics that I may lack knowledge on and I am willing to listen to others opinions and to formulate my own thoughts. I do have a passion for furthering my education and I'm always excited to learn from those around me. Additionally, I have a strong background in management and supervision, business and finance, and policies and procedures which makes me a good candidate for a seat on the school board.

Mr. Link commented thank you and our last question this evening is what do you feel is the biggest challenge to public education now?

Mrs. Snyder commented I feel there are many challenges that public schools are facing today and from what I observe, our school district is taking steps to identify them and find solutions. I do recognize that as I continue to attend board and committee meetings.

Mr. Green commented I'm just going through my mind here, I'm trying to figure out what might be the best way to do that and what I might suggest is, if you have any other questions for Rhonda while she's here and while she's on the seat, instead of having her go out and then come back in and then go through that, if you have any questions for Rhonda, maybe this would be the time to ask it if you choose to do so. I do want to say I applaud all of you for trying to find solutions because we do need to always be looking for solutions to the problems in our school district. I do understand that one of the toughest challenges that public schools face today is having to send excessive dollars to alternative schools. While I am an advocate of school choice, I do believe that when it comes to public schools, paying for students to attend alternative schools there is an imbalance as to what public schools are

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**(cont.)**

being charged for students to attend these schools. I feel that there needs to be some type of cap on what public schools should have to pay. As I mentioned, there are many problems that public schools are facing today and identifying those issues is half the battle. As a parent, community member and business owner, I want to be able to use my skills to help our school district identify these challenges and find solutions for the benefit of all our students.

Mr. Link commented thank you.

Mrs. Snyder commented is it okay if I say a little more too?

Mr. Link commented it's okay with me, but I'll look to the school board.

Mr. Green commented I'm not sure I was writing, so I did not hear your question.

Mrs. Snyder commented I just wanted to say a little more just to finish up where I am.

Mr. Green commented up to three minutes, then you have to stop.

Mrs. Snyder commented okay, I just wanted to thank all of you for continuing to serve this district, especially over the past few years which have been quite challenging for everyone. Your perseverance does not go unrecognized. And again, I thank you all for your consideration and time and hope that you will choose me for the vacancy.

Mr. Link commented thank you.

Mr. Green commented thank you, Natalie.

Mrs. Snyder commented do you want me to step out for her then?

Mr. Link commented you're welcome to stay. The purpose of that is more so, right. But you're welcome to stay.

Mr. Green commented I think I said it before, if I didn't, Mr. Link will ask the questions. So we have a couple of questions to ask you tonight, you now, respond how you see fit or proper. At the end, if you have a statement you want to make, you're certainly allowed that. Not a problem.

Mr. Link commented hi Ms. Wanamaker. Thank you for applying for the vacant board seat and also thank you for your flexibility for having to reschedule from last evening to this evening.

Ms. Wanamaker commented absolutely.

Mr. Link commented I have three questions for you this evening. I'll just kind of go through them and then like Mr. Green said if you want to give like a closing statement, you can do that. Okay, so the first question is why are you interested in being on the school board?

Ms. Wanamaker commented being involved on the Northern Lehigh school board for me is not just the pride that I have in Northern Lehigh School District, but also the future for the students and the community here at Northern Lehigh. I've been paying attention for the last few years and I think that we need to really put the children first and I have interest in helping to do that.

Mr. Link commented okay, thank you. The next question I have is what do you feel you can offer the school board.

Ms. Wanamaker commented well one of the things that really excites me is the committee about getting involved with volunteering and I feel like not just my past but my passion really is community involvement and getting not just the entire school board but the school district itself more involved in

the community, so that's one of the things that I have to offer. Also, I'm very good with budgets, so I think I can help with that.

**INTERVIEWS  
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BOARD  
VACANCY  
(cont.)**

Mr. Link commented okay, thank you. And finally, our last question is what do you feel is the biggest challenge to public education now?

Ms. Wanamaker commented retaining good faculty that's committed to moving our district forward. I brought this in, so I'm going to follow up on that with this. To have Mr. Strohl's picture on the front of the school newspaper - he has pride in our school district, he's a graduate of our school district as well all of the teachers focused in the article and I think that's one of the things that you know we can look at as a community. Yes it's hard to bring folks back that didn't necessarily work here or go to school here, but employing folks like Mr. Strohl and Mr. Hauser who have excellent leadership skills I really think move the district forward.

Mr. Link commented thank you. Is there anything else you'd like to share as a closing statement?

Ms. Wanamaker commented I did not prepare a closing statement, but I did want to say I think the board is doing a great job. There's a lot of work ahead, we're kind of set back a little bit the last few years, but looking forward to the future and being able to be involved in the future of the students and the district as a whole. I think there's a lot that we could do together.

Mr. Link commented okay, thank you.

Mr. Green commented okay and I apologize. I should have asked board members if they had any questions for the candidate, and I did not do that. So, I'm going to ask, if you have a question to ask the candidate. The only thing I have to say is you have to ask both candidates the same question to be consistent and my apologies to the board for not doing that. I totally let that slip. My apologies. Okay, having said all that, at this point, we will open the meeting for nominations of candidates. Is there a nomination to have either candidate?

**NOMINAT-  
ION OF  
CANDIDATE  
TO FILL  
SCHOOL  
BOARD  
VACANCY**

Mr. Christman commented I'd like to nominate Natalie Snyder.

Mr. Green commented Natalie has been nominated. Are there any other nominations?

Mr. Fedorcha commented I'd like to nominate Alice Wanamaker, please.

Mr. Green commented Alice has been nominated. This is probably a weak formality because we have two candidates and they've both been nominated. Is there a motion to close nominations?

Mr. Fedorcha made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Kulp for the closing of nominations.

YEA: Mr. Chad Christman, Mr. Robin T. Distler, Mr. Gary S. Fedorcha, Mrs. Rhonda Frantz, Mr. Mathias Green, Jr., Mr. Robert L. Kern, Jr., and Mrs. Donna M. Kulp (7)

NAY: None (0)  
Motion carried.

Mr. Green commented okay, so first of all, we will vote on Natalie Snyder. I would ask the secretary to call the roll, please.

Mrs. Kulp for roll call:

YES: Mr. Christman, Mr. Distler, Mrs. Frantz, Mr. Kern, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Green.

NO: Mr. Fedorcha

Mr. Green technically it doesn't matter, but I will be a yes also. So, we have five yes votes and congratulations, Natalie, you've been elected. Thank you for your perseverance. There's a lot of thick heads up here that you have to get through sometimes. But you knew that. And Alice, I want to thank

**NOMINATION OF CANDIDATE TO FILL SCHOOL BOARD VACANCY (cont.)**

you for taking the time to apply and for coming to the meeting tonight and for juggling your schedule. Thank you very much, we appreciate it.

Mr. Link commented thank you both.

Mr. Green commented I'm not sure, I have a real technicality here. Does the meeting still need to be open for when you swear her in or can you swear her in when the meeting is closed?

Mr. Link commented I believe it has to be open.

Mr. Green commented I think it has to be too. And just in case, also we don't know, I'm going to ask you at this point to swear in the candidate.

Mr. Link commented I can't do it. I am not allowed to that.

Attorney Smith commented I think we have to have, it's a formal process. Yeah, I'm not even allowed to do it anymore.

Mr. Green commented you did it before?

Mr. Link commented I've never done that, sir.

Mr. Green commented I'm sure you have. Forget that, is there a motion to adjourn?

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Fedorcha made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Christman that the special meeting of the Northern Lehigh School District Board of School Directors adjourned.

YEA: Mr. Chad Christman, Mr. Robin T. Distler, Mr. Gary S. Fedorcha, Mrs. Rhonda Frantz, Mr. Mathias Green, Jr., Mr. Robert L. Kern, Jr., and Mrs. Donna M. Kulp (7)

NAY: None (0)  
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Kulp  
Acting Secretary

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_ President  
Mr. Matthias J. Green, Jr.