

## NESHAMINY

## Board picks new athletic director

*While residents criticized the board for not going with the administration's recommendation, board members said they believed experience was important.*

By RACHEL CANELLI COURIER TIMES

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When faced with replacing the Neshaminy High School athletic director, the school board members had two choices: a) the administration's top pick, or b) someone with more experience.

They chose b.

The board voted 6-2 Tuesday night to hire Thomas Magdelinkas as the assistant principal, director of co-curricular and athletics. Board members Sue Barrett and William Spitz voted no.

At an annual salary of \$117,255, Magdelinkas, who is currently serving as an assistant principal at the Middletown high school, will replace longtime Neshaminy fixture Sheila Murphy.

Although Barrett, Spitz and several residents who spoke were not critical of Magdelinkas, they condemned the rest of the board for not trusting the administration's process and recommendation.

"You should resign," Langhorne resident Chris Graham told the board. "You basically told [the administrators] that [their] services are no longer needed."

Superintendent Paul Kadri explained to the public that the month-long search began with a paper screening of 60 applicants. Then nine candidates were selected and interviewed by two five-member committees. They were narrowed down to two, said Kadri.

Officials refused to name the other finalist.

"This board is not paying attention when residents beg us not to interfere in personnel decisions," Spitz said. "Let administrators do their job and let's stick to ours."

But board member Irene Boyle said experience is critical.

Magdelinkas has worked more than four years as an assistant principal in Neshaminy, according to district documents.

Board member Jason Bowman added that many individuals outside the board pressured certain board members to vote for who they wanted. Bowman did not reveal which members or who pressured them.