

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
GENERAL SESSION MINUTES, JANUARY 20, 2011

President Johnson convened the general session of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 7:03 p.m. in the District Office General Meeting Room on January 20, 2011.

Board Members Present: Bernie Brady, Mel Brodsky, Gary Johnson, Kelly Jowett, Susan Moore, Kathleen Oxberry, Beth Suchsland, Alan Tabachnick and Mitch Zimmer.

Board Members Absent: None.

Also Attending: Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Jeffrey T. Sultanik, Solicitor; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer; Karen Berk, Director of Pupil Services and Special Education; Andrew Boegly, Chief Information Officer; Terry Yemm, Director of Operations; Richard Hartz, Director of Human Resources; John Quinn, Director of CITV; David M. Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary; Jessica Knudsen and Stacey Wong, Student Board Representatives; Brian Adams; Devon Landgraft; Amy Venkus; Michele Morris; Cecilia Quarino; Julian Weiss; Pooja Dindigal; Brian Weiner; Robert Franz; Alan Fiermonte and Mary Thiess.

Mr. Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Cotter stated that Colonial Instructional Television had prepared a video in tribute to the School Board in honor of School Director Recognition Month. After the video presentation, the audience applauded Board members for their contributions to the community.

Mr. Johnson stated that the Board had met in executive session on December 8, 2010; December 22, 2010; January 5, 2011; January 14, 2011 and January 18, 2011. He added that the Board will meet in executive session following the meeting, as well.

Minutes: Mr. Johnson sought Board action on the minutes of the Work Session of November 15, 2010; the General Session of November 18, 2010; the Finance and Audit Committee of December 1, 2010; the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of December 3, 2010; the Board Reorganization Meeting of December 6, 2010; the Special Meeting of December 6, 2010; the Curriculum Committee of December 8, 2010; the Community Relations and Student Life Committee of December 9, 2010; the Human Resources Committee, the Special Meeting and the Finance and Audit Committee of January 5, 2011; the Community Relations and Student Life Committee of January 6, 2011; the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of January 7, 2011; the Curriculum Committee of January 18, 2011 and the Safety and Wellness Committee of January 19, 2011. See enclosures #1 through #13 and #56 and #57.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Jowett seconded a motion to approve the minutes as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 9-0.

Financial Reports: Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider the financial reports on the list for approval. He noted that the reports are for both November 2010 and December 2010. They include the Budget Transfers, the Bond Fund Report, the Capital Projects Report, the General Fund/Federal Program Bills, the Capital Reserve Fund, the Food Service Bills/Cafeteria Report, the Outstanding Investment Report, the Cash Flow Summary, the Comparison of Taxes Collected, the Real Estate Tax Escrow Report, the Trust Fund Report, the Reconciliation of Cash Accounts, the Budgetary/Deficit Status Report and the Treasurer's Report for the months ending November 30, 2010 and December 31, 2010. See enclosures #14 through #26.

Mrs. Suchsland moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the financial reports. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 9-0.

Public Comments on the Agenda: None.

Staff Report: Plymouth Elementary School Principal Judi Lipson and teachers Michele Morris and Cecilia Quarino spoke about technology initiatives and showed a video on the innovative use of flip phones at the school.

Old Business: None.

Correspondence: Mr. Tabachnick asked the Board to consider five donations. The first are two grants from the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation totaling \$8,000 to the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) Robotics Club and the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program at the school. See enclosure #27. The second is a \$3,000 donation from Ceridian Corporation to the PWHS AVID program. See enclosure #28. The third is a \$1,000 gift from Landsknecht Publishing Services, Inc. to the PWHS Robotics Club. See enclosure #29. The fourth is a \$10,000 donation from the Morgan Stanley Foundation to support after school enrichment and a school-wide field trip at Conshohocken Elementary School. See enclosure #30. And the fifth is a \$2,500 donation from the Deed of Trust of Joshua Morris to be used for general education purposes. See enclosure #31.

Mr. Brodsky moved and Mrs. Oxberry seconded a motion to accept the donations and gifts. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 9-0.

Mrs. Oxberry sought Board acceptance of additional gifts, the first being a \$10,000 donation from the PWHS Band Boosters. She stated that the funds were acquired as part of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Grant. See enclosure #32. Mrs. Oxberry also reported that the District is in receipt of two \$1,000 grants from the Pennsylvania Staff Development Council. See enclosure #33.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Jowett seconded a motion to accept the monies. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 9-0.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter reviewed his report that includes the Personnel Report and Substitute List, the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List and a list of Adult Evening School instructors for the spring 2011 semester. See enclosures #34 through #36. He stated that the Personnel Report and Substitute List contains 15 additional actions apart from the 15 he reported on Monday evening. The new actions include two leaves of absence, three returns from leave, five extensions of assignment, one revised assignment and four assignments completed. Dr. Cotter stated that the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List includes two appointments and a resignation. He added that 29 teachers are listed for the Adult Evening School (AES). He noted that AES classes are held only if there is enough registration. Mr. Zimmer sought and received confirmation that the members could vote on all three items of the Superintendent's Report in one motion.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Suchsland seconded a motion to approve the Superintendent's Report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 9-0. Mrs. Suchsland wished to note that the Personnel Report included the end of assignment of Whitemarsh Elementary School secretary Mary Ellen Clarke, who passed away and will be dearly missed.

Board Student Representatives Report: Ms. Knudsen reported on Course Planning Night and Course Selection Day at the high school. She noted that the Spanish exchange students left on January 7, 2011 and will return on January 27, 2011. Ms. Knudsen also stated that first-semester final exams were held last week. Ms. Wong reported on Financial Aid Night, the National Art Honor Society Induction, the winter sports season, the Colonial Players' production of Titanic and the Second Semester Open House.

New Business: Mr. Zimmer stated that the District has not received its ballots for the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU) General Operating Budget for the 2011-2012 school year. See enclosure #37. He noted that the Board will take action on the budget in February. Mr. Zimmer reminded Board members that he previously announced his resignation from the MCIU Board. He

recommended that Mr. Brodsky be appointed as the District's new representative on the MCIU Board.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve Mr. Brodsky's nomination. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 9-0.

Mr. Johnson sought Board action on the 2011-2012 Operating Budget for the Central Montco Technical High School (CMTHS). See enclosure #38. He stated that there is a 0.6 percent increase over last year's budget, however Colonial's contribution will decrease by 3.99 percent. Mr. Johnson added that the budget must be approved by a majority of the sending school districts.

Mr. Brady moved and Mrs. Suchsland seconded a motion to approve the CMTHS 2011-2012 Operating Budget. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 9-0.

Mr. Johnson asked Board members to consider four policies on a first-read basis. They include #916 Volunteers, #707 Use of School Facilities and Equipment, #913 Advertising and #231.1 Commercial Vendors. See enclosures #39 through #42. At Mrs. Suchsland's request, Dr. Cotter explained that all four policies have been reviewed extensively by various Board committees. He reported that the policy regarding volunteers is a new policy that grew out of a concern of security around volunteers in the school buildings. He noted that the administration reviewed policies from other school districts and the Pennsylvania School Boards Association before drafting the policy. Dr. Cotter added that the policy requires different levels of security depending on the amount of contact a volunteer has with students. Dr. Cotter reported that the facilities policy is an existing policy that includes a revision regarding the use of school facilities by political organizations. He noted that the advertising policy is a new policy that gives the Board the opportunity to solicit advertising. Dr. Cotter concluded that the existing commercial vendors policy required revisions because of the new advertising policy.

Mrs. Jowett moved and Mrs. Oxberry seconded a motion to approve the four policies on a first-read basis. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 9-0.

Mr. Johnson sought Board action on a revision to the 2011-2012 school year calendar that was previously approved. See enclosure #43. He stated that PSSA testing dates posed a conflict with a scheduled holiday on March 16, 2012. He stated that the revised calendar moved the holiday to January 2, 2012.

Mrs. Suchsland moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the calendar revision. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 9-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to act on a request for Mr. Sherman to attend the Pennsylvania School Public Relations Association annual workshop in Pittsburgh, Pa., on Tuesday, March 15. See enclosure #44.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Oxberry seconded a motion to approve the conference request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 9-0.

Mr. Zimmer asked Board members to consider four student trip requests in one motion. They include a Ridge Park Elementary School second grade trip to the Adventure Aquarium in Camden, N.J. during February. See enclosure #45. The second trip is for 20 PWHS students to attend the state DECA Career Development Conference in Hershey, Pa., from February 23-25. See enclosure #46. The third is for the PWHS Class of 2012 to travel to Orlando, Fla., from April 11-16, 2012. See enclosure #47. The final trip is for two PWHS students to attend Pennsylvania Music Education Association festivals in January, March and April. See enclosure #45.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Brady seconded a motion to approve the trip requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 9-0.

Solicitor's Report: No Report.

Committee Reports: Intermediate Unit: None.

CMTHS: Mr. Johnson stated that Mr. Brady had been elected Vice President of the Joint Operating Committee.

Human Resources: Mrs. Moore reported that there is a negligible increase in projected student enrollment for the coming year and, as a result, staffing levels are not expected to increase. She stated that further scrutiny may be needed moving forward.

Finance: Mrs. Oxberry reported that the preliminary budget, as discussed at the December committee meeting, projects a \$6 million shortfall. She noted that major expenditures centered on salary and benefits, technology infrastructure and an increase in the District's contribution to the Pennsylvania State Employees Retirement System. She added that the District expects a reduction in state and federal funding. Mrs. Oxberry stated that the committee directed the administration to identify \$3 million in budget cuts. She added that the preliminary budget must be approved by February 14. She noted that the administration has attended PTO meetings to discuss the budget and also plans to tape a presentation to air on CITV.

Curriculum: Dr. Gorodetzer reported that in December the committee reviewed and recommended text books for Spanish 1, 2 and 3. She added that the committee heard a report on outreach efforts to community preschools. Dr. Gorodetzer stated that Science Curriculum Supervisor Maria Belino demonstrated the Pearson Interactive Software at the January committee meeting. She added that Mrs. Berk provided an update on Adequate Yearly Progress for special education students as well as an action plan for moving forward. Dr. Gorodetzer also noted that the committee received an update on the review of the World Languages program.

Facilities Management and Transportation: No report.

Community Relations and Student Life: Mr. Zimmer reported that the District hosted approximately 325 senior citizens for the annual winter concert and luncheon at PWHS. He added that more than 375 seats have already been reserved for the spring matinee and luncheon. He noted that senior citizens have until January 28 to return their registration forms for the event. Mr. Zimmer promoted the January 25 Parents Council meeting and added that the District is teaming with Whitmarsh Township and the Plymouth Meeting Whole Foods Market to host the first-ever Ecofest on February 3.

Safety and Wellness: Mrs. Suchsland reported on the January 19 meeting. She stated that Whitmarsh Township Police Officer Fran Wheatley informed the committee that PWHS was awarded a \$2,000 grant from the State Farm Insurance Company to help promote a "Don't Text and Drive" campaign. Mrs. Suchsland added that the committee reviewed a request from the county health department regarding the use of PWHS as a Point of Dispensing site in the event of an emergency. She also stated that Mrs. Berk presented results of a survey to assess the behavior, knowledge and attitudes of sixth, eighth, 10th and 12th graders with respect to alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and violence. She stated that the survey revealed that students feel safe and comfortable in our schools. Mrs. Suchsland also reported on a \$2,000 gift of new cookware to the Food Services Department, and other initiatives, associated with the Chefs Move to Schools program.

Legislative: Mrs. Suchsland noted that new Governor Tom Corbett was recently sworn into office.

Municipal Liaisons: No report.

Public Comment: Mr. Franz asked if the Victory Fields lighting project was completed and how much of the cost of the lights and comfort station was paid by Chestnut Hill College (CHC). Mr. Yemm stated that the project was completed and that CHC was responsible for one half of the cost of the lighting project. Mr. Franz also commented on a community meeting held to assess the amount of light shining into the back yards of homes along the bike path. He stated that the lights were mysteriously turned off during this meeting. Mr. Franz also spoke at length regarding traffic problems surrounding a PIAA football playoff game at PWHS. Mrs. Suchsland stated that the Safety and Wellness Committee spent time discussing the PIAA game and lessons learned from that event. She added that the Whitmarsh Township Police Department stated that it was a positive event for the community and area restaurants.

Mrs. Moore noted that the police department sent e-mails to the District commenting on how well the event was handled. Mrs. Oxberry added that the Victory Fields lights were purposely turned off in order to show various light settings. Mr. Yemm reported that Whitemarsh Township has requested a lighting audit. Mr. Johnson noted that outside organizations using the lights on Victory Fields will be charged a usage fee to help cover operating costs.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David M. Sherman". The signature is stylized and cursive.

David M. Sherman
Board Secretary